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THE PROLOGUE

WITH

Introduction, Text, Foot-Notes
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CHAUCER
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Introduction, Text, Foot-notes, Explanatory Notes, Questions and Answers, Critical Opinions, and Glossarial Index.

by

Prof. BASHIR HUSSAIN M. A.

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INTRODUCTION

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340 ?-1400)

Life : Geoffrey Chaucer was born in London. The son of John Chaucer, a vintner of Thames Street, who had also small estate at Ipswich, and was occasionally employed on service for the King (Edward III)—and that explains the son's introduction to the court. Chaucer seems to have received an ample education as we see from his acquaintance with all branches of learning of his time. But there is no evidence that he had been at either of the universities.

In 1357 he appears as a page to Lady Elizabeth, wife of Lionel, Duke of Clarence ; in 1359 he first saw military service in France, when he was made prisoner, later ransomed in 1360. In 1367 he was one of the valets of the King's Chamber, a post always held by gentlemen, and received a pension of 20 marks : soon afterwards, he was one of the King's esquires. In 1369 the death of Blanche, wife of John of Gaunt, was the occasion of a poem by Chaucer in honour of her memory—(*The Dethe of Blaunche, the Duchess*). In the same year he again bore arms in France, and during the next two years he was frequently employed on diplomatic missions.

In 1370 he was sent to Genoa to arrange a commercial treaty on which occasion he might have met Petrarch. In 1374 he got from the Corporation of London a lease for life of a house at Aldgate ; soon after he was appointed Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidy of Wool, Skins, and Leather in the port of London : he also received from the Duke of Lancaster a pension of £10. In 1377 he was sent on a mission to Flanders to make peace with the French King. After the accession of Richard II in that year he was sent to France to arrange the marriage of

the King with the French Princess Mary. In 1382 he became Comptroller of the Petty Customs of the port of London, and in 1385 was allowed to appoint a deputy, which enabled him to devote more time to writing.

He had in 1373 begun his *Canterbury Tales* on which he was occupied at intervals for the rest of his life. In 1380 he was elected Knight of the Shire for Kent. His fortunes suffered some eclipse when his patron, John of Gaunt, was abroad, and his brother, Gloucester exercised supreme power in the state. He was dismissed from his employment, leaving him no income beyond his pension. However, when Richard took the Government into his own hands, his friends were in power again, and he was appointed Clerk of the King's works. This office he had for two years, after which he received a pension of £20 from the King. On the accession of Henry IV (1399) an additional pension of 40 marks was given to him. In the same year he took a lease of a house at Westminster, where he died on October 25, 1400.

Chaucer and His Age : William Morris writes (in his *Prologue to The Earthly Paradise*) ;

'Forget six centuries overhung with smoke,
Forget the snorting steam and piston stroke,
Forget the spreading of the hideous town ;
Think rather of the pack-horse on the down.
And dream of London, small and white and clean,
The clear Thames bordered by its gardens green.'

The picture of London presented by Morris, enamoured of the Middle Ages, might be a little coloured, but is not substantially untrue. The old order was certainly breaking up—the medieval repression and inhibition ; people were growing impatient of old restraints and convention, and were actually on the point of rejecting the medieval outlook with its interest in the world to come—the spirit of monasticism. It was the dawn of a new age that would usher in the Renaissance, and the light seems to have been caught by Chaucer, and his poetry became the medium of it.

It is true that Chaucer's world was largely medieval, that he grew up under the influence of medieval literature and medieval ideas. But the impact of the coming Renaissance began to be felt by him, and silently and even unconsciously assimilated by him into his poetry and intellectual outlook. "We cannot study the history of this time without finding traces of the new spirit growing under the old forms, which it will presently break and utterly destroy."

(1) **Chivalry** : It will be interesting to study how the two ages—the Medieval and the Modern—seem to have met and blended in the Work of Chaucer. Chivalry was still a potent social force. In England the reign of Edward III was marked by a showy magnificence ; in the Hundred Years' War, begun in the reign of Edward, the Black Prince won his spurs at Crecy—and it was a stirring time, and the finer breath and spirit of the time is caught in Froissart's *Chronicles*. The outward forms and shows of chivalry were still a part of national life in England ; Edward himself was a patron of the tournament ; he had a Round Table at Windsor, in emulation of that King Arthur, he instituted the chivalric Order of the Garter.

(2) **Chaucer's England** : But it will not do to forget that side by side with the splendour and romance of the Middle Ages, there existed dirt and squalor, crude ignorance and unspeakable coarseness, which were no less characteristic of the time. There were great stretches of forest haunts of the deer, the grey wolf, the boar, and the wild bull ; there were marshes such as the great fens of Lincolnshire and Somerset untenanted as yet by birds, Town people dwelt within walls and shut the gates at curfew. London itself, except on the side towards the river, was still a walled town, the houses were chiefly made of wood and timber ; the streets, narrow and unpaved, sloped to a gutter or open sewer in the middle, foul with refuse, but the Thames was still clear and beautiful, and beyond the city gates spread fair meadows, where the tender spring green of the grass was starred by the daisies that Chaucer loved to great and honour. A stone bridge, with houses

built on either side of its narrow roadway, connected Chaucer's London with Southwark on the opposite bank of the Thames. At Southwark there were fields and gardens, and round wooden buildings for bear-baiting or cock-fighting ; there, near the end of the bridge, was the old Tabard Inn, in whose square courtyard mostly companies of pilgrims used to gather on their way to the shrine of St. Thomas a Becket at Canterbury.

(3) **The New Order :** This strange, picturesque, narrow world of the Middle Ages was soon to come to an end. The invention of gunpowder spelt the death of chivalry. The new instrument of destruction, cannon, was soon to shatter the solid masonry of the feudal castles and make the armour of the knight a useless encumbrance. The rising power of the English people was another important factor. The battles in the Hundred Years' War were remarkable not only for chivalric courage and courtesy, displayed by mounted knights, but for the great part played by the people of England—the English yeomen, the archers whose "grey goose shafts" did so much to turn the day at Crecy and Poitiers. It has been rightly observed that the triumph of the foot-soldiers over the cavalry was "the death-knell of Feudalism."

(4) **Black Death and Economic Distress :** There was open opposition to the feudal power of the King and Barons, and it found a political expression in the establishment of the House of Commons. And as a matter of fact, in the "Good Parliament" of 1376, we find the 'Commons' united against their feudal superiors, the Baronage and the King. The old manorial system of land tenure was being abandoned for one which seemed to offer some relief to the labourers. The successive visitations of a terrible plague called. "The Black Death," produced serious economic consequences. Many died of the plague ; many more perished miserably from want and hunger. Farms were left untilled : some had scanty scrops, and in several cases, for want of labourers, the harvests remained ungathered. The land was filled with vagrants, driven by illness and starvation to beggary of theft. On top of these sufferings

and hardships people were called upon to pay a heavy tax to defray the cost of the French War. The unsettled condition of labour, the biter discontent and the growing impatience of the working classes found expression in popular uprisings. The class distinctions which were so inseparable a part of the feudal society began to be challenged. While the French chronicler celebrates the glories of knighthood, the English people are singing the crude ryhme :

'When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman ?'

We hear of the preaching of John Ball, "the made priest of Kent". Inside Canterbury Cathedral was the rich shrine of St. Thomas A Becket, but outside in the cloisters the voice of John Ball seemed to be the voice of the modern world democracy. The new spirit is reflected in the Vision of William Langland.

(5) **Religion** : In this sphere too there was a spirit of revolt. Though medieval Christianity was still supreme, the Church commanded enormous wealth and property, and her services were splendid and impressive, the Church was losing her great hold upon the masses of people. The days of the devotion of Crusades were gone for ever. The Pope by moving from Rome to Avignon in 1309, showed himself a tool of the growing power of France. The increasing corruptions and abuses in the Church, the lack of spirituality and the worldly spirit in many of the clergy, shook the faith of many. The break-up seems to have started already. It was the near advent of the Reformation.

(6) **The New Learning** : The dawn of the Renaissance in Italy began to spread its light through Europe. Petrarch and Boccaccio reflected the new trend in their writings and in their general outlook on life. *The Divine Comedy* of Dante who died in exile at Ravenna, was the final and supreme expression of the world of medieval Christendom. The New Learning meant the liberation

of intellect, imagination and sensibilities, which represented a break-away from medieval repression and inhibition. The scholastic learning of the Middle Ages still entrenched at Oxford and Cambridge. The Oxford scholars Duns, Scotus and William Occam—are among the last of medieval schoolmen. And we find the Oxford *Clerk* in the *Canterbury Tales* delighting in Aristotle, a philosoepher who was highly esteemed in the old education of th- monastic schools. Chaucer, while still attracted by the pomp and pageantry of the Middle Ages, and though painting the picture of medieval England, caught and reflected the light of the New Learning. The humanism and realism of the New Learning distinguish Chaucer from medieval writers.

Three Periods of Chaucer's Works : (1) French Period : Chaucer started as a French love-poet, writing in the English language. The conventions of the French school which Chaucer followed stemmed from the system of courtly love, and they seem to permeate nearly all medieval non-religious literature. The most famous work of the period was the *Roman de la Rose* (in French), of which Chaucer produced a translation– an elaborate allegory, in a dream setting of Love, the rose, growing in a mystic garden, guarded by symbolic power from the lover's approach. During this period he wrote also "ballads, roundels, virelays," intricate French lyrical forms of the day. *The Book of the Duchess*, written in 1369 to solace John of Gaunt, the King's third son, for the death of his wife, Blanche, makes use of the conventions of courtly love, and is the only notable work, original and independent, of the French period.

(2) **Italian Period** : Chaucer's visit to Italy in 1372 was a turning point in his poetical career. He readily imbibed the new spirit—the humanism of the New Learning. Before the Renaissance had actually reached the shores of England, Chaucer brought the impact of the new intellectual forces into his poetry—and it was a reorientation of medieval outlook for, after all, Chaucer did not discard medieval culture and scholastic learning. In

fact he reinterprets medieval culture in the light of the Renaissance and it is a great achievement for a poet of the day. To the Italian period belong *the House of Fam, The Parlement of Foules, Troilus and Creseide and The Legend of Goode Women.* For *Troilus and Creseide* Chaucer goes straight to Boccaccio's *Philostrato,* but though the poem is set against the conventions of courtly love Chaucer breathes a new spirit and significance into it, far tr anscending the scope of the original. In the *Legend of Goode Women* adapted from a latin work of Boccaccio, *De Claris Mulieribus*, the same transforming spirit is evident again. The long *Prologue* to the poem is interesting. The May Day setting is there, which is taken from the *Roman de la Rose*, but Chaucer seems to react against the creed of courtly love. The conventions of courtly love are mildly satirised in *Troilus and Creseide* but the *Prologue* to the *Legend of Goode Women* reads like a definite recantation. We might well believe that Chaucer gradually rid himself of the influence of the French school. He was beginning to strike out an independent line for himself. In the *House of Fame*, as well as in the *Legend of Goode Women* Chaucer undertakes the task of constructing a work which would constitute a setting for a group of tales, but he left both unfinished. He began to turn to more serious work (known as the English period), based upon a dramatic perception of life. He was well qualified for such a work by his wide experience of men of all ranks and conditions, and his keen observant powers—and in the new set-up of growing national consciousness (for by this time the Hundred Years War had unified the people into a homogeneous body, no longer Norman and Saxon, but English). So, Chaucer was going to make a literary presentation of contemporary society on a great scale.

(3) **English Period** : In his *Decameron*, Boccaccio furnished the example for Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales,* which is the great work of his English period. Collections of stories, both secular and sacred, had been numerous and

popular in the Middle Ages ; the Renaissance inherited the taste for them, while enlarging their scope and humanizing their content. In Boccaccio's *Decameron* a company of aristocratic young people are represented as having taken refuge from the plague raging in Florence, in a villa on the slopes of Fiesole. They wander through the valleys of oleanders and myrtles, or sit beside the fountains of the villa gardens ; and beguile the time with tales of sentiment and intrigue Another Italian, Sercamoi, had pictured a pilgrimage composed of many classes of people, presided over by a leader or governor, and entertained on their journey with tales, narrated by an official story-teller, who is Sercamoi himself Chaucer adopts a similar framework in his *Canterbury Tales*, but he makes his setting much more national and racy ; he individualizes his characters so as to make them a gallery of living portraits of his time : varies his tales so as to include almost all the types of narratives known to literature at the close of the Middle Ages, and, most important of all, puts his tales into the mouths of separate pilgrims. While there is a store-house of medieval tales in the *Canterbury Tales*, the *Prologue* is of supreme interest as depicting the national life of the time, lit up with Chaucer's humanism, humour and realism.

4. Chaucer's Place in the History of English Literature: Chaucer has been called 'the father of English literature,' and there is more than one reason to call him so. He set up the standard English language ; he was the first to teach the art of English versification ; he breathed a cosmopolitan spirit (as against the insularity of the race) into English literature and linked it up with the intellectual movement of the continent. He is in fact the first great English poet by reason of his being the first great European poet. Old English poetry, unaffected by Romance or Latin elements, practically ceased to exist before the Norman conquest. French influence began to grow in importance, and a literature, chivalric in tone and foreign in form, began to prevail in England. Such poems as the *Poema*

Morale, the *Bruie*, the *Moral Ode*, though written in English, are French in source and inspiration. *King Horn* and *Havelock the Dane*, which appeared a century later, may be claimed as the works of native English genius. The political events—the loss of Normandy by King John and the Hundred Years' War—which finally separated England from France—accompanied by the growing sense of national unity—made for the emergence of the native strain. The events form the background of Chaucer's England.

Appearing at such an epoch. Chaucer combines in himself the best elements of French and English culture. The foreign strain in his poetry is completely merged in the native stock. This will be evident by comparing him with his two contemporaries—Langland and Gower. Langland seeks to revive the old English tradition—the alliterative verse—in his *Vision of Piers Plowman*—a work quite progressive in spirit, but reactionary in form and technique. Gower stands for foreign culture ; a scholar and a gentleman as he was, he believed until later that English was no language, fit to be the medium of his self-expression. The *Confessio Amantis* is his only English work to which he might have been stimulated by the success of Chaucer's English poems. Otherwise Gower was inspired by Medieval Latin and Medieval French.

Chaucer stands midway between Langland and Gower. He owed much to France and Italy ; he was familiar with the works of Virgil and Ovid and Latin prose-writers (particularly Boethius's *De Consolatione*), but he seemed to have assimilated the romantic spirit of his French and Italian predecessors and contemporaries. When Chaucer was a student of French poetry, the chivalric ideal was losing its hold in France, and often lent itself to satiric treatment with the rise of the *bourgeois* spirit, no less evident in France than in England. The new spirit it well evinced in the parody of the original *Roman de la Rose* (by Guillaume de Lorris) in its continuation by Jean de Meung. The old courtly tradition was not killed by the new spirit at once. We can trace its influence in Chaucer's *Book of*

the Duchess. It was contact with Italy that really set Chaucer free from the medieval tradition and the limitations of medieval culture. It was nothing but the liberating influence of the Renaissance. Chaucer made no less than three Italian journeys, and it is surmised that Chaucer might have met Petrarch during his visit to Genoa in 1372. In any case Chaucer seems to have been inspired by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. There is not much of Dante's influence in Chaucer ; the two poets are different in spirit and outlook. He owes the material of his stories —*Knight's tale* and *Troilus and Creseide*—to Boccaccio, but here again Chaucer deals with these stories in an independent spirit. Chaucer borrows but a sonnet of Petrarch in *Troilus and Creseide.* It is the culture of France and Italy that contributed most to the making of the poet. But his native genius finally transcended and triumphed over all foreign influences ; with his extraordinary power of intellectual assimilation and with his no less extraordinary perceptual faculty, he could not but be a poet on his own. His native genius sets him apart as the first great English poet ; he made the language and settled its permanent form ; he settled also the first elements of English versification, and led the way in evoking the melody of sounds and achieving marvellous effects of rhythm and harmony—a poet with an unsurpassed gift of melody.

Summary and Review of the Prologue : The *Prologue* is so interesting because it suggests the framework of the *Canterbury Tales* and paints a picture of national life. Boccaccio's *Decameron* was an example to Chaucer. But Chaucer goes beyond his model, and gives a new significance to his work by his insight and perception, by his genial humour and humanism.

In the *Prologue* the poet represents himself as alighting, one spring evening, at the Tabard Inn, in Southwark, a suburb at the southern end of London Bridge, where later the famous Elizabethan playhouses, Shakespeare's among them, were to spring up. Southwark was the place of

departure and arrival for all south-of-England travel, and especially for pilgrimages to the shrine of Thomas a Becket at Canterbury.

A company, setting out on such a pilgrimage, gathers in the inn ; Chaucer makes their acquaintance and forms one of the party. The pilgrims are thirty-two in all, including the poet. There is a knight lately come from foreign wars ; he has fought in Prussia and Turkey, jousted in Tramisene, and been present at the storming of Alexandria—a high-minded, gentle-mannered, knightly adventurer, a type of the courteous, war-loving chivalry which was rapidly disappearing. With him is his son, a young Squire, curly-haired and gay, his short, whitesleeved gown embroidered like a mead with red and white flowers ; he sums up in himself the gifts and graces of brilliant youth. Their servant is a yeoman, in coat and hood of green, a sheaf of peacock arrows under his belt, a mighty bow in his hand, and a silver image of Saint Christopher upon his breast : he is the type of that sturdy English-yeomanry which with its grey goose shafts humbled the pride of France, of Crecy and Agincourt.

There is a whole group of ecclesiastical figures, representing the different interests of the medieval church. Most of them are satirical portraits, exposing in their worldliness and materialism the abuses which had crept into the Church and which Wycliffe denounced. First of all, there is a Monk who cares only for hunting and good cheer ; his bald head shines like glass, his bright eyes roll in his head, he rides a sleek brown palfrey, and has "many a dainty horse" in his stables ; his sleeves are trimmed with fur at the wrists, his hood is fastened under his chin with a gold love-knot. As a companion figure to the hunting Monk there is "Madame Eglantyne", the Prioress : she is a teacher of young ladies, speaks French "after the school of Stratford-atte Bowe," is exquisite in her table manners, affecting as well as she can the stately behaviour of the court. Other ecclesiastics are hangers on and caterpillars of the Church : the Friar, intimate with hospitable franklins, innkeepers and worthy

women and despising beggars and lazars ; the Summoner, repulsive person with "fire-red cherabin face" ; the Pardoner with his bag full of pardons "come from Rome all hot," and bits of cloth and pig's bones which he sells as relics of holy saints. Chaucer treats the evil churchmen with good humoured tolerance. He produces a better effect by setting beside them, as a type of the true shepherd of the Church, a "poor Parson," such as, partly under the influence of Wycliffe, was coming forward to reform the Church. Chaucer paints the character of the Parson, poor in the world's goods, but "rich of holy thought and work," with a loving and reverent touch. The Parson's brother travels with him—a Plowman, a "true swinker and a good" who helps his poor neighbours without hire and loves them as himself ; he reminds us of Piers the Plowman.

A crowed of other figures fill the canvas. There is a Shipman from the west-country, a representative of those adventurous seamen, half merchant-sailors, half smugglers and pirates, who had already made England's name a terror on the seas and paved the way for her future naval and commercial supremacy. There is a poor Clerk of Oxford, riding a house as lean as a rake and dressed in threadbare cloak, who spends all that he can beg of borrow upon his studies ; he represents that passion for learning which was stirring everywhere in Europe, and which was to culminate in the Renaissance. There is a Merchant, in a Flemish beaver hat, on a high horse, masking as he can, with his air of self-importance, the fact that he is in debt.

There is a group of guild-members, in the livery of their guild, all worthy to be aldermen : they, along with the merchant, represent the mercantile and manufacturing activity ; if anything, it points to the future rise of England as a great commercial power. There is the wife of Bath, almost a modern feminist figure, hit off with masterly humour and realism—a permanent human type : she has had "husbands five at church-door," and

though "somdel deaf" hopes to live to wed several others ; she rides on an ambler with spurs and scarlet hose on her feet, and on her head a hat as broad as a buckler. In fact they represent the entire range of English society in the fourteenth century, the highest aristocracy and the lowest order of villains or serfs being lelt out.

At supper the host of the Tabard Inn proposes that on their journey to Canterbury each of them should tell two tales and two more on their return journey, and this to relieve the tediousness of the way. He offers to travel with them and to act as master of ceremonies. And the rest of the pilgrims are to submit to his judgment as to which of them has told the best story ; and the best story-teller among them is to be given a supper at the general expense. This decision being accepted by all, they set out on their journey early next morning. Lots are drawn to decide who shall tell the first tale. The lot falls to the knight.

Detailed Study of Chaucer—and Short Comments on Different Aspects, Chaucer—a Poet of Nature and Humanity. The opening of the *Prologue* is suggestive of the atmosphere and background that make the poem a veritable picture gallery. It appears at once that Chaucer is equally interested in Man and Nature. The chief interest of the *Prologue* lies in the freshness and truth with which each member of the party of pilgrims is set before us. Each with his goodness as well as his foibles and weaknesses springs into life at once. The noteworthy point is that Chaucer preserves throughout an impersonal, objective attitude, "Judge not, lest ye be judged," We are to imagine that Chaucer joins the group of pilgrims, but he is not there to judge or condemn any of his fellow pilgrims. He has the role of an onlooker—a mere observer. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." It is a profound saying of Shakespeare. None among English poets but Chaucer and Shakespeare realized the full import of it. Chaucer finds himself knit in bonds of human relationship with the pilgrims on their way to Canterbury.

He draws the character of each both as a type and as an individual—and each impresses us as a living person—and each must have been true in his own way—the Knight, the Pardoner, or the poor Parson. To learn of medieval society we should rather go to Chaucer's *Prologue* than to the documented history of the period. Chaucer had the secret spring of humanity in the alembic of the genius and could, therefore, perform the miracle of putting life and movement and speech of the day into those dim and distant figures of the Middle Ages—and they seem to be as real to us as the men and women of to-day. One critic rightly says "As one after another of that immortal procession passes by, the intervening centuries are forgotton, and we ourselves seem fourteenth-century pilgrims riding with the rest."

Then again into the company of pilgrims, Chaucer brings all the life and colour of the spring. It is a morning in the middle of April as the company with the host of the Tabard Inn, Harry Bailly, as "governour', pass out of the square courtyard of the inn and take the high road towards Canterbury. The freshness and the glory of the spring are all about them ; showers and sunshine and soft winds make the budding world beautiful in tender green, and in fulness of joy innumerable birds break into song. This time, when the sap mounts in the trees, and the world is charged again with the love of life, fills them with restless desires and the spirit of adventure :

'Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.'

Chaucer seems to be peculiarly sensitive to the resurgence of life in spring, and brings man in tune with it, for man too feels the ache and longing that spring stirs in his heart. Everywhere in the poetry, Chaucer manifests delight, natural, almost childlike. in birds and grass, in flowers and sunshine, in "May time and the cheerful dawn."

(1) Chaucer's Humour : The every essence of humour is detachment. Chaucer's humour possesses this quality of

detachment. His humour is spoken of as sunny, bringing the light of indulgent smile into the sad business of life. Chaucer's humour—and his humour is allied to his humanism—gives a new zest to life. After all there is something to make life worthwhile, to relieve it of its tedium and sharp pang. It is just a way of looking at life. It is the holiday mood ; it is the indulgent comic outlook. We must learn to laugh at the things of life, that might otherwise oppress us, and drive us crazy. Chaucer has this gift of laughter. He is not a grouser. He is not rebellious or cynical. He accepts what life gives with a cheerful courage and manly resignation. Because he has the gift of laughter, and because he has the gift of large-hearted tolerance, he is among the greatest comic writers—the father of English humour. He has a Shakespearian sympathy with the follies and absurdities he describes.

It is his human-heartedness and tolerance that make his humour so genial. He exposes the worldliness and materialism of the Monk, but he is not hard upon him. Chaucer has not the spirit of a reformer like Langland. He is a humorist and dispassionate observer. He takes things as they are, and makes the best of them. The Monk has his own view of life. Why should he pore on a book in the cloister and toil with his hands "As Austin bit"?

'Of pricking and of hunting for the hare was all his lust.'

A monk should have more serious business in life, but there is little harm if one such monk may deflect from his spiritual concern. He obeys his own natural and also human instinct in following the path he has chosen :

'He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt.'

There we have the picture of a man, given to self-indulgence. After all he is making the best of the world, of which, if of anything, he is pretty certain. Chaucer thus treats the character in a humorous, tolerant spirit.

The Friar and the Pardoner are certainly worse types. Sin can be ransomed for money. Chaucer humorously

says that the Friar "was a noble post" to his order, and cultivated the franklins and the worthy women of this town. And he taught the sinner that instead of weeping and prayers he should give silver to the poor friars. The Pardoner sold pardons (remissions of sin, granted by the Pope of Rome) and bits of sail and pig's bones as relics of holy saints to the poor folk of the country. The Pardoner is just a swindler. The Friar was a sort of today, cringing before the rich people, associating with the tavern-keepers and despising the lazar of beggar. But they do not appear as despicable as they really are. Chaucer's all-tolerant humour redeems their vileness. Chaucer's human touch saves them from being despicable.

So again the "gat-tothed" wife of Bath whom we might have despised as a vulgar, wanton woman, is sketched with Chaucer's tolerant humour and human graciousness :

> 'In all the parishe wif ne was ther noon,
> That to the offryinge before hire sholde goon.'

The wife of Bath had thus a privileged position. After all she was a respectable woman in society—and why should she not be so ?

> 'Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,
> For she koude of that art the olde daunce.'

She must be then much in demand in fashionable society. Chaucer can survey the motley scene of life with an indulgent smile. He brings together here diverse characters from different grades of society each marked off with his own individuality, but it is Chaucer's all-pervasive humour that creates a poignant interest in their individual tastes, habits and occupations. The *Prologue* is the supreme triumph of Chaucer's most human, all-tolerant humour.

(2) **Chaucer's Realism.** Chaucer is the first creator of human characters in English literature. Even the chivalric romances that came before Chaucer, though dealing with human figures, presented us with shadowy

abstractions—they could have little human interest. Chaucer's sanity of genius and masterly common sense, combined with his sense of reality and profound knowlegde of human nature, almost Shakespearian, imparted a realistic trend to his work. Chaucer is indeed a master of the narrative art, and a master of the realistic art. The man and woman he depicted in the *Prologue* are real today as they were in Chaucer's days. They are made of the genuine human stuff—they have the very essence of humanity. We meet the real men and women of the Middle Ages in Chaucer's *Prologue* and not in contemporary social historical sketches. Chaucer's keen powers of observation seized upon the essential attributes of human nature ; and then the poet's pen turned them to shapes and gave to "airy nothing a local habitation and a name." This is the true creative art (as Shakespeare conceived it), and Chaucer owns this gift, and it goes to the core of reality. This we should designate as *creative realism.* Chaucer's *Prologue* is an abundant illustration of it. Dryden rightly says. "Here is God's plenty." Blake's comment settles the point once for all ; Of Chaucer's characters......some of the names or titles are altered by time, but the characters themselves ever remain unaltered, and consequently they are physiognomies or lineaments of universal human life beyond which nature never steps."

(3) **Chaucer's Characterization** : Some critics are of opinion that Chaucer's characters are more types than individuals. To make a rigid distinction between type and individual is an abstraction. Chaucer has created living human figures as contrasted with the pale shadowy characters of the old metrical romances. Each of the characters in the *Prologue* has his individual traits, and none is colourless, and likely to be confused with another. These characters are no doubt typical or representative of a class. Chaucer has portrayed the essential attributes, and, therefore, there has been a deep probing into the mental and physical make-up of the class, of which the character is a representative. While such a character is

sufficiently individualized, it has the basic, enduring qualities of the class. It is the way to give character something of universality. The characters of the *Prologue*, however they might differ from us in their mode of living and in their way of thinking, seem to the living men and women, and we are as much interested in them, such is the creative art of Chaucer, as in the men and women of today, for both appear to have the same essential permanent human attributes. It would be doing injustice to the characters, created by Chaucer, if we should say that they are merely types. The individual traits which make each one a distinct personality, have been minutely featured. We may take any of the characters, the Monk, the Friar, the Wife of Bath, or the Man of Law, and each takes possession of our mind, and has an abiding place in it. Chaucer's art and genius have bestowed immortality upon these characters. It is the triumph of realism—not realism of the coarser type with which we are familiar to-day but realism which is related to the representation of living reality. As Frederick Engels says, "Realism, to my mind, implies, besides truth of detail, the truthful representation of typical characters under typical circumstances." Chaucer achieves this kind of realism in his characterization—and it means that type and individual are indissoluble.

(4) **Chaucer's Limitations (as a Poet) :** There were certain aspects of the life which Chaucer touched lightly or ignored. He was brought up as a page at Court, and came immediately under the influence of "gentilesse" of French poetry and the manners and outlook of the ruling class. He was employed on embassies abroad—in France, Flanders, Italy. But as he happened to be socially gifted, to be lively and humorous, to be intellectually alert and observant, he never shunned contact with men of different classes in his day, and his poetry is born of his extensive knowledge and experience in human affairs and of his keen observation of his contemporaries and of all that went on before his eyes. But

he has his limitations : He is a court poet ; something of the courtier still clings to him. He remains the poet of a feudal society and sounds in his poetry the voice of chivalry in its class distinctions as well as in its splendour. He paints the pictures of men and women of various social conditions from the knight to the miller and the ploughman ; the portrayal is marked by breadth of observation rather than breadth of sympathy for the miseries or wrongs of the poor. He paints medieval life in its outward aspects while Dante, revealing its soul, probes to the centre. He takes the world as it is ; he loves the good, but the sight of evil stirs in him no deeps of moral indignation ; on the contrary, he often regards grossness, vulgarity and moral and spiritual laxity with an amused tolerance. He seems to dwell at his case in his broad sunshiny world of green fields and merry jests ; but if he took life and its graver issues lightly, this buoyant good humour is not only his limitation but also his enduring charm. While Matthew Arnold acknowledges Chaucer's greatness as a poet whose rich heritage of verbal music and poetic phrasing is taken up and further extended by Shakespeare, Milton and Keats, he points out that Chaucer is lacking in "high seriousness", which is the supreme test of great poetry.

Originality of Chaucer's Genius : In every great writer there is a purely personal element and there is also a social element. The personal element makes him what he is and gives to his creative imagination its true bent. The social element determines the way he is moulded by the society in which he lives, or influenced by the writer he admires or follows, or by the physical characters of the spot of the earth where he resides. The genius of Chaucer needs to be examined in relation to these elements.

The English society in which he moved was a little more complicated than the society of feudal times. The old romance writer recognited four class divisions—sovereigns and princes, knights, churchmen, and the commonalty. For this fourth, or proletarian class, he enter-

tained a supreme contempt ; he regarded them as only fit to hew wood and draw water for princes and knights ; and nothing delighted him more than to paint the ignonimous rout and promiscuous slaughter of thousands of this base-born multitude by the hand of a single favourite knight. This picture of society had no doubt much truth in it before the privileges of feudal lords were broken and their castles ceased to be a terror to the neighbourhood. Even when society had begun to change, the romance writers continued to write to the tune of the baronial hall and accept the feudal establishment as a *status quo.*

It is the characteristic of genius, to have a profound insight into the real ; then, boldly to face it, lastly, by the art, which is its inseparable companion, to reproduce it under appropriate forms. Thus it was with Chaucer in the England of the fourteenth century. He had no literary models to work by — in his own language at least—except the antiquated and unreal feudal portraits in metrical romances. Chaucer had sympathies as large as the nature of man, a soul that could not endure a dead form or a mere conventionality, and an intellect which arranged the human beings around him according to their intrinsic qualities—by what they were rather than by what they were called. He felt, as Burns did, that

'The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.'

and accordingly, in the *Prologue* the existing aspects and classes of English society are described with a broad and impartial hand. The knight is indeed there—one figure among many ; nor does Chaucer, like Cervantes, present him in ridiculous light ; knigthood in the fourteenth century was still a reality, not a piece of decayed pageantry as in the sixteenth. He and his order appear as what they actually were—that is, as one element in society amongst many ; they do not, as in the pages of romance, cast all other orders of laymen into the shade. Churchmen are, on the whole, represented without partiality and without bitterness ; there may be a satirical touch in

his portraiture of some of the ecclesiastical personages, but it is no more than that. On the whole, Chaucer may be truly said

> 'Nothing to extenuate,
> Nor set down aught in malice ;'

and if we have an affected Prioress, a roguish Friar, and a hypocritical pardoner, we have on the other side the Clerk of Oxenford. With his solid worth and learning, and the well-known character of the good parish priest. The Franklin is the representative of the sturdy, hospitable, somewhat indolent, English freeholder, whom, however, participation in the political and judicial system, introduced by the energetic Norman, had made a better and more sterling person than were his Saxon ancestors. Then we have the mixed population of cities, represented by the Merchant, the Man of Law, the Shipman, the Doctor of Physic and the good Wife of Bath—all from the middle classes; and by the Haberdasher, the Carpenter, the Weaver, etc., from the lower. The inferior ranks of the rural population are represented by the Plowman, the Miller, and the Reeve.

The *Prologue* is certainly most valuable as a picture of contemporary society. But it does not exhibit the distorted image, which the romances, catering to the feudal pride of the great lords, had conjured up ; it opens out to our view the real living face of English society. No doubt it lays bare many evils—the profanation of sacred callings, the abuse of things originally excellent, ill-repressed tendencies to sloth, luxury and licentiousness. But it shows also a state of things in which every member of society even the humblest, had recognized rights, and was not sunk beneath the dignity of man ; we have the high and the low, the rich and the poor ; but the high are not inordinately high, and the low are not debased. The cement of religion binds together the whole social fabric, causing the common sympathies of its members to predominate above the ground of estrangement.

Next the influence of external nature upon Chaucer's poetical development may be traced. To the English poet of the fourteenth century Nature was far from being the pruned, tamed and civilized phenomenon that she was and is to the poets of the eighteenth century and later. Chaucer speaks naturally, not figuratively, of the *greenwood* by which he means no more than what we now call a *bush* that is, the wild woodland country, from which the original forests had not yet been removed by the hand of man. Even in Shakespeare's time large portions of England still came under this category ; he could naturally sing of the 'greenwood tree,' and found no difficulty in describing. *As You Like It*, what in Australia would be described *as bush life*—that is life of a free earth and under a free heaven—nothing of turnpike road nor of trespass and its penalties, but permitting men to rove at large, and in Shakespeare's phrase, "to fleet the time carelessly as in the golden world." This condition of external nature gives a largeness and freshness to Chaucer's poetry ; the scent of the woods and the song of the birds seem to hang about the verse, and 'sanctify the numbers';

His poetry also reveals the eminent healthiness, the well-balanced stability of his mind. He is no sickly naturalist, he does not turn with disgust from town life to 'babble o' green fields' ; he neither feels nor affects such a scorn or disapprobation of man and society as to be driven to take refuge in the untarnished loveliness of Nature in order to find fit materials for poetical creations, Human society, no less than external nature, is in the eyes of Chaucer beautiful and venerable. With Shakespeare and Spenser, but pre-eminently with the former, the case is the same. In Shakespeare there is none of that morbid revulsion against the crimes or littlenesses of Society which drove Byron and Shelley into alienation and open revolt against it ; nor, again, is there that estrangement from active life and popular movement which makes Wordsworth the poet of the fields and mountains, not of man. Like Shakespeare who truly 'holds the mirror up to nature, not external only but human,

Chaucher presents a broad and essentially human picture of society in all its varied aspects repellent and attractive, yet in the main establishing noble and dignified relations between man and man. There can be no surer test of the originality of Chaucer's genius than his handling of Nature and humanity, marked as it is by profound insight, breadth of vision, human sympathy and tolerance, and by minute observation of traits and features, mental and physical, of the characters he portrays.

Chaucer's Grammar

1. Final -*e*

-*e*. Old English endings -*a*, -*o*, -*u*, or -*an*, -*on*, levelled in Middle English to -*e*, or -*on*. Final -*e* has values of pronunciation, for correct rhythm, and also as indicating the grammar and meaning. The following cases should be noted :

(i) Plural of adjectives, *Ferne halwes* (*l.* 14).
(ii) Singular of weak or definite adjectives *Swete breeth* (*l.* 5).
(iii) Infinitive of verbs. *To Seke* (*l.* 17).
(iv) Ist person singular and plural of the present indicative of verbs. *I mene* it so (*l.* 703).
(v) Weak past tense, singular and plural, Full well his wit *bisette* (*l.* 279).
(vi) Present and past subjunctive. No *fille* upon hire breste (*l.* 13).
(vii) Strong past participles. His berd been *shake* (*l.* 406).

2. Nouns

The endings are	Sing.	Plur.
Nom. Acc.		-*es*
Gen.	-*es*	-*es*
Dat.	-(*e*)	-*es*

(i) Uninflected genitive. *Lady* veyl (*l.* 695).
(ii) Plural in -*en Hosen* (*l.* 450).
(iii) Neuter plural (uninflected). Of twenty *years* of age (*l.* 82).

3. Adjectives

Plural forms in *-e*. Shoures *soote* (*l.* 1)
Plural forms of past participles used adjectively. *Couthe* (*l.* 14).
Singular of weak adjectives. *Swete breeth* (*l.* 5).

4. Pronouns

The 3rd Person plural forms are
Nom. They
Acc. Hem
Gen. Hir, here
Dat. Hem

The feminine genitive singular form is the same as the Genitive Plural.

Its (possessive case of *it*) is a modern English form ; the Middle English is *his*.

(i) The 2nd person singular forms *thou*, *thee*, are still used in familiar talk, or where a superior addresses an inferior. Ye (nom.) yow (acc.) are the forms used in formal address, or to an equal or superior.

(ii) *That* is the ordinary relative Pronoun. ***Which*** is found generally followed by *that*. *Who* is the interrogative and indefinite form. *Whos*, the *whos*, *which he* are used.

(iii) *This*, *these* are used commonly in Middle English when no particularization is meant.

5. Verbs

(i) Present Indicative

I (ch) come	we come (n)
thou com (e) st	ye come (n)
he com (e) th	they come (n)

When the stem ends in *-d*, -or-*i*, the 3rd person singular is sometimes contracted, *e.g.*, *rit* for *rideth*, *stant* for *standeth*.

(ii) The infinitive is preceded by *to* or *for* to interchangeably.

(iii) The imperative plural, used politely to a single person, end in (e) th. Often *as* or *so* is used with the imperative.

(iv) The past participle frequently shows the Old English prefix *ge*—as *y*—, *ycome* (*l.* 77).

(v) *Gan* is used with verbs for the past tense, *gan preye* (*l.* 301) *i e.* prayed.

(vi) Impersonal verbs. *Liste*, *liketh*, *thinketh* are used with the dative pronoun. There were two distinct verbs in Old English. *Thyncan*, to seem me thynketh (*l.* 17)—an impersonal use, and *then-can*, think, that men koude *thynke* (*l.* 340).

(vii) Irregular verbs.

Hight (e)—preterite and past participle of *hote* (*n*), command, promise.

Hette, *hatte* are also forms of the preterite.

Wite (*n*) to know. Present Indicative, 1. *Woot* (*wot*), negative *noot*. 2. *Wost*. 3. *Woot* (*wot*). Plural. Wite (*n*). Preterite 3rd person singular. *Wiste* ; negative form, *niste*. Past participle, *wist*.

See (*n*), to see. Preterite, sey (*e*), *say*, *seigh*. *See* is present subjunctive.

Folle (*n*), to fall, Preterite, *fel* or *fil*. Past participle, *y*— *fallen*, preterite subjunctive 3rd person singular, *fille*.

Sitte (*n*), to sit. Preterite plural, *Sete*. Preterite subjunctive singular, *sete*.

Go (*n*), to go, Preterite plural, *Yeden*. *Wente* is preterite *vende*.

Mowe (*n*). may. Present Indicative. 1. *May*. 2. *Mayst* 3. *May* Plural.

Mowe (*n*), Present subjunctive, *mowe*. Preterite. *moste*.

Conne (*n*), be able. Present Indicative. 1. *Can*. 2. *Canst*. 3. *Can* Plural, *conne* (*n*), *can*, Preterite, *coud couth* (*e*).

6. Adverbs

Adverbial forms can sometimes be distinguished from adjectives by the final *e*, *faire* (*l.* 94), neatly. Adverbs also end in *-es*, and *-en*, *hennes*, *sithen* ; sometimes have the ending *lich liche*, or its weaker form—*ly*, *roialliche sikerly*.

CRITICAL OPINIONS

"The poetry of Chaucer is really, in all essential respects, about the greenest and freshest in our language. We have some higher poetry than Chaucer's poetry that has more of the character of a revelation, or a voice from another world : we have none in which there is a more abounding spirit of life, a truer or fuller natural inspiration. He may be said to verify, in another sense, the remark of Bacon, that what we commonly call antiquity was really the youth of the world : his poetry seems to breathe of a time when humanity was younger and more joyous-hearted that it now is. Undoubtedly he had an advantage as to this matter, in having been the first great poet of his country. Occupying this position, he stands in some degree between each of his successors and nature. The sire of a nation's minstrelsy is of necessity, though it may be unconsciously, regarded by all who come after him as almost a portion of nature—as one whose utterances are not so much the echo of hers as in very deed her own living voice—carrying in them a spirit as original and divine as the music of her running brooks or of her breezes among the leaves. And there is not wanting something of reason in this idolatry. It is he alone who has conversed with nature directly, and without an interpreter—who has looked upon the glory of her countenance unveiled, and received upon his

heart the perfect image of what she is. Succeeding poets, by reason of his intervention, and that imitation of him into which, in a great or less degree, they are of necessity drawn, see her only, as it were, wrapt in hazy and metamorphosing adornments which human hands have woven for her, and are prevented from perfectly discerning the outline and the movements of her form by that encumbering investiture. They are the fallen race, who have been banished from the immediate presence of the divinity, and of that majesty which sits throned to them behind impenetrable clouds : he is the First Man who has seen God walking in the garden, and communed with Him face to face.

"But Chaucer is the Homer of his country not only as having been the earliest of her poets—(deserving to be so called), but also as being still one of her greatest. The names of Spenser, of Shakespeare, and Milton are the only other names that can be placed on the same line with his !"

On Prologue and Canterbury Tales. "His genius is another thing here altogether from what it is in his other writings. Elsewhere he seems at work only for the day that is passing over him, here, for all time. All his poetical faculties put forth a strength in the *Canterbury Tales*, they have nowhere else shown ; not only is his knowledge of life and character greater, his style firmer, clearer, more flxible, and more expressive, his humour more subtle and various, but his fancy is more nimble-winged, his imagination far richer and more gorgeous, his sensibility infinitely more delicate and more profound. And this great work of Chaucer's is nearly as remarkably distinguished by its peculiar character from the great works of other poets as it is from the rest of his own compositions. Among ourselves at least, if we except

Shakespeare, no other poet has yet arisen to rival the author of the *Canterbury Tales* in the entire assemblage of his various powers. Spenser's is a more aerial, Milton's a loftier song ; but neither possesses the wonderful combination of contrasted and almost opposite characteristics which we have in Chaucer—the sportive fancy, painting and gilding every thing, with the keen observant, matter-of fact spirit that looks through whatever it glances at : the soaring and creative imagination, with the homely sagacity, and healthy relish for all the realities of things : the unrivalled tenderness and pathos, with the quaintest humour and the most exuberant merriment ; the wisdom at once and the wit : all that is best, in short, both in poetry and in prose, at the same time."

The Plan Of
The Canterbury Tales

In this section we reproduce the plan of the Canterbury Tales as given Ottis and Neddleman.

FIRST DAY, APRIL 17—LONDON TO DARTFORD

Tale Told By	Type and Source	Style and Comment.
KNIGHT. Ideal figure, noble in port and manners, devoted to loyalty and honour, generosity, courtesy, and humanity.	Chivalric romance of Palaman and Arctic) Shortened adaptation of Boccaccio's *Le Teselde.* Influenced by Statius's Thebaid, and Bothius.	Longest tale and traditionally considered his best. Chief charms lie in its highly wrought beauty of tapestry, and thoroughly informed romanticism of tone. Superior to original in burning movement vivid situation, individualising characterisation, effective narrative. Possibly over abundant in detail. Many anachronisms(eg. two ancient The ban gentle-men pictured in a medieval tournament.)
MILLER Loud talker, noted wrestler, teller of ribald stories	Fabliau (of the carpenter John his wife Alison and 'her lover Nicholas).	Directed at the Reeve, who had been a carpenter. Direct Dramatic; inventive. comic

Tale Told By	Type and Source	Style and Comment.
Burly of figure, wart on nose, red of beard.	Source unknown, but the separate jests have their parallels.	power. Masterly unity of setting and action. But naughty.
Reeve Slender, Choleric, hair cut short in front. No man could catch him in arrears, as deceitful as the Miller.	Fabliau (of how two Cambridge students got the better of the cheating Miller of Trompigton) Source unknown. Numerous analogues ; eg. Boccaccio's *De-cameron* (IX, 6) and Jean de Bove's De Gombert of des Deus Clers.	Retaliotes at the expense of the Miller. Licentious, clever. Excellent Choracterization, skilful narrative. Reveals the essential characteristics of the fabliau.Often considered even more salacious than *The Miller's Tale*.
Cook Expert. Knewall the flavouring powders, and good ale.	Unfinished but promises to be a fabliau. Source unknown.	Tale followed in same manuscripts by what is probably the spurious Tale of Gamelyn probably meant for The Yeoman's Tale.

SECOND DAY, APRIL 18
DARTFORD TO ROCHESTER

Tale Told By	Type and Source	Style and Comment
Man of law Knew by he art all the cases and decisions. Could convey the property as though it were held in absolute possession.	Virtue story of constance. Immediate source of this wide spread folk tale of the wife who symbolizes Resignation or Fortitude is Nicholas Trivete's often-so-called. *Anglo Norman Chronicle*	Moralizing reflections, legendary character. Constance almost personifies 'Christianity itself'. Improbable narrative often considered inappropriate to the character and vocation of the teller.
Shipman. Skilful Mariner Rough, jovial, sunburned. Quite conscienceless ; had stolen many a draught while the supercargo was asleep.	Fabliau (of a merchant, his wife, and the monk John). Source unknown. Probably Chaucer obtained the matter from some French Fabliau. Similar stories elsewhere ; *e. g.* in Boccaccio's *Decameron.* (VIII. I)	Happily conceived, carefully executed. More delicate, yet more immoral, than the tales of the Miller and the Reeve. Feminine phraselogy in the use of pronouns seemingly indicates that the tale was originally written for a woman pilgrim, probably the wife of Bath.

Tale Told By	Type and Source	Style and Comment.
Prioress.		
Of noble birth, coy, amiable, tender of heart, Fond of pretty clothes. Had little refinements and affections.	Legend ("*Miracles of the Virgin*") or exemplum. Concerns the "Litte clergeon". Source indefinite. Many versions exist. *e. g. Hugh of Lincoln.*	Touchingly told with exquisite taste. Simplicity of plot, faultlessness of technique Chaucer's poetry is never loftier.
Chaucer		
a) *Rime of Sir Thopas.*	a) Unfinished verse satire (of the metrical romance)	a) Unerring burlesque of the absurdities of the romances, and possibly of Flemish knight-errantry. Diffuse.
b) *Tal of Melibee.* Chaucer is discribed by the Host as riding ever with his stare upon the ground, exchanging pleasantries with no one. Has a figure of generous proportions.	b) Prose romance (of the world, the flesh and the devil.) Immediate source is Jean de Meun's or Renaud de Louens's *Livre de Melibe et de Dame prudence* in turn abridged from Albertano da Brescial's *Liber Consolationis et Councilis.*	b) Possibly its 'bathos' forced allegory' spiritless and interminable moralising", will alienate the modern reader. Ker also states that it "is perhaps the worst example that could be found of all the intellectual and literary vices of the Middle Ages". Possibly the tale was intended for the Man of Law. (one of the two prose tales in the collection ; see the Parson's Tale.)

Tale Told By	Type and Source	Style and Comment.
Monk.		
Bald, fond of riding and hunting, jovial, Full Fat, in good physical condition, loving a fat swan "best of any roost."	Series of examples of men "Yfallen out of high degree") Main sources are Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virrorumet Feminerum Illustrium*, and the *Roman de la Rose*. Incidental sources are the Scriptures, Greek, Roman, and Spanish history or mythology.	Uninteresting, tedious. Eight line stanzas riming ababbcbc (hence called the "Monk's Tale Stanza"; by adding a final alexondrine the Spenserian Stanza is formed.)
Nun's Priest.		
He is not described in the Prologue. It has been inferred that he might well be of powerful physique, sangu ine complexion and keen eyes.	Best fable (of Das Russel the Fox and Master Chaunticleer the Cock) or exemple um or mock heroic poem. Ultimate source is the French *Roman de Renart* and the German *Reinecke Fuchs*.	First imporant mock heroic in English. Mature in its vivacious dialogue, gentle and quizzical humor, well motivated action, ironical pathos, acute observations heighten effect. Characterisation more important than slight plot.

THIRD DAY, APRIL 19—ROCHESTER to OSPRINCE

Tale Told By	Type and Source	Style and Comment.
Physician.		
Well dressed but moderate in expenditure. Knew the hours astrologically propitious for giving medicines 'For gold in phisik is a cordial. Therefore he loved gold in special."	Tragic story of Appius and Virginia or exemplum Source in an old Roman tale *e.g.* found in Livy's History (Book III) and in the *Roman de la Rose.*	Not even "a long digression on the character and educat!on of young girls". (F. N. Robinson) can halt the progress of this simple tale. Sometimes considered not particularly befitting the character of the Doctor.
Pardoner.		
Flaxen / haired, beardless face glaring eyes. Treble voiced seller of Papal indulgence. Kittridge once called the Pardoner the one lost soul among the pilgrims.	Exemplum. or medieval illustrative sermon of Death and the Three Revellers. Immediate source of Eastern tale unknown. Oldest version in the Hindoo Collection called *Vedabbha Jataka* a recent analogue in Kipling's Second *Jungle Book* ("*The King Ankus*").	Has been called the best short narrative poem in the language. Matchless for its dialogue, characterisation atmosphere, and swift crescendo. Deeply poetic approaching in its spirit the fatalism and terror of Greek tragedy, Heroic Couplet.

Tale Told by	Type and Source	Style and Comment.
Wife of Bath.		
Prosperous Cloth maker. Had married five husbands. Barawny, gat toothed, red face, partly deaf. Coarse spoken but good natured.	Arthurian fairy tale inculcating a lay sermon (of What thyng is it that women of most desiren?) Source unknown. Many parallels of the version of the Loathly lady exist.	Of greater importance than the tale is its Prologue, brilliant in its exposition. Satire verve, raciness penetrating humor. Utter frankness about marriage and virginity. Paradoxically the tale itself is told gracefully, not coarsely.
Friar.		
Expert in gossip and flattery/Preferred the worldly pleasure of women and taverns. Hypocritical.	Fabliau (of a Summoner carried off by the Devil.) Immediate source is possibly the Latin collection Promptuarian Exemplorum.	Attempt to discredit the Summoner. Skilful characterization, comic irony. For pungent dialogue see that between the two travellers Rimmed couplets.
Summoner.		
Cherubed and pimpled face. Close set eyes Repulsive conduct. Fleeced whomever he could.	Fabliau (of the Friar and the invalid Thomas) or popular anecdote. Exact origin unknown. Possibly suggested by the Tale of the Priest's Bladder, by Jakes de Basiu	Purpose to expose the Friar. Direct discourse and psychological observation heighten the characterisation and vitalise the realistic tale of the coarse farce. J. L. Lowes has declared the picture of the Friar to be Chaucer's greatest portrait.

Tale Told by	Type and Source	Style and Comment.
		within a tale. According to G. H. Cowling the most weakly constructed of all his tales.
Clerk.		
Lean of figure, sober of bearing. Preferred books to rich robes. A philosopher "Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre". "And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche."	Virtue story (of Patient Griselda and the Marquis of Saluces symbolic of patience and obedience. Source is Petrarch's De Obedientia ac Fide Uxoria Mythologia, rendered into ; Latin from Boccaccio's De Cameron (X. 10)	Lack of 'energetic compression' to quote a critic. is more than compensated by the narrative treating sympathetically and with beauty the trial and tribulations of the heroine. Her character, however is ridiculous in the eyes of the modern women.
Merchant.		
Forked beard. Flemish beaver hat. Rich powerful. Always talking about increasing his profits, keeping the sea guarded at all costs.	Fabliau (of Baron January, his wife May, and her lover Damyan). Source unknown : but the basic Marchen (folk tale or fairy story) frequently goes by the name of the "Pear-Tree Episode."	Dramatic satire on married life, delightful in its telling but almost bitter in its attitude. January's cuckoldom is poetically just, "a sort of crude morality."

FOURTH DAY, APRIL 20—
OSPRINGE TO CANTERBURY

Tale Told by	Type & Sources	Style & Comment
Squire. Aspirant to knighthood. Medieval dandy: curled locks; could sing and play the flute.	Unfinished typical romance (of King Cambuscan and the wondrous gifts). Source unknown. Close analogue in the romance of *Cleomades* by Adenes le R i.	Reveals many characteristics of the romance, Heroic couplet. Only other unfinished tales are the Cook's Tale and Chaucer's Rime of Sir Thopas.
Franklin. White-beard as is the daisy, sanguine complexioned. Disciple of Epicurus. Possibly identical with a Sir John Bussy.	Lai, or short romantic tale of Arveragus, his wife Dorigen, and Square Aurelius) Source, according to Chaucer, is a lost Breton lay; but Source seems to be Boccaccio's Decameron and Filo colo.	The spirit of courtly love and the supernatural features breathe romance into this idealized character-story. Felicitously told, beautifully descriptive, outstandingly dramatic.
Second Nun. Probably to be identified with "Another Nonne." "Chapeleyne" to the Prioress.	Saint's legend (of St. Cecilia). Source is the *Legenda Auren* (*"Golden Legend"* of Jacopo da Varagine.	Its genuine dignity & piety prompt many to stamp Chaucer as sympathetically and basically devotional. Seven-line stanza.

Tale Told by	Type & Source	Style & Comment
Cannon's Yeoman		
The Cannon and his Yeoman over-take the pilgrims at Roghton under Blee. The Yeoman is garrulous.	Contemporaneous tale exploding the impostures of Alchemy Source unknown ; but conjecturally the anecdote might be the result of a personal experience of Chaucer.	Straightforward, interesting, Maturity of style, command of rhythm. Effective is the description of the scene when the crucible is broken. Note the Yeoman's veering feelings toward his master. Heroic couplet.
Manciple.		
As steward to a college or an inn of court he outwits all his learned masters.	Fable (of why the Crow is black). Source is Ovid's story of Apollo and Coronis(*Metamorphoses*, II, 11. 531 632).	Digressions and exempla yet short and simple. Sometimes considered a tale not appropriate to the Manciple.
Parson.		
Ideal portrait of a poor but generous parish priest, rich in holy thought and work. Faithful diligent. Wycliffite in the shepherding of his flock. Taught "Cristes lore." but "first he folwed it himselve."	Prose sermon (on Penitence, with emphasis upon the Seven Sins). Source unknown; but main parts derived from Frere Lorens's Somme des Vices et des Vertus and Raymond de Pennaforte's Summa Casum Poenitentiae (Bk. III).	Longest tale in the collection and also the most boring. Lifeless in style and swamped by wearying sermonizing (Only other prose tale in the series is Chaucer's Tale of Melibee ; see under "Second Day").

PROLOGUE

Here bygynneth the Book of the Tales of Caunterbury

Whan that Aprill with his shoures[1] soote[2]
The droghte[3] of March hath perced[4] to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour[5]
Of which vertu[6] engendred is the flour[7];
Whan Zephirius[8] eek[9] with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt[10] and heeth[11]
The tendre croppes,[12] and the yonge sonne[13]
Hath in the Ram[14] his halfe cours y-ronne,[15]
And smale foweles[16] maken melodye,
That slepen[17] al the night with open eye,—
So priketh hem Nature in hır corages,[18]—
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres[19] for to seken straunge strondes.[20]
To ferne[21] halwes,[22] kowth[23] in sondry londes,
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,[24]
The hooly blisful martir[25] for to seke,
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke[26]

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1. Showers. 2. Sweet. 3. Drought (dryness). 4. Pierced. 5. Sap. 6. Power. 7. Flower. 8. West wind. 9. Also. 10. Copse. 11. Heath. 12. Shoots. 13. Sun. 14. Name of a Sign of zodiac. The sun in April runs a half course in the Ram and half course in the Butt. 15. Run. 16. Birds. 17. Sleep. 18. Spirit. 19. Pilgrims bearing a palm branch. 20. Shores. 21. Distant. 22. Saints. 23. Known. 24. Go. 25. Ihomas A. Becket. 26. Sick.

THE PROLOGUE

When the month of April with its sweet showers penetrates through the drought of March the flowers are born and when the west wind puts life into the tender shoots and the young sun has run half its course in the Ram, then people desire to go to a pligrimage and the palmers to seek the stranger strands and to pay a visit to famous saints known all over the world. From every distant corner of England, they like to go to Canterbury to pay their homage to the great martyr—St. Thomas A. Becket of Canterbury who helped them when they were sick.

Bifil[1] that in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard[2] as I lay,[3]
Redy to wenden[4] on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At nyght were come into that hostelrye[5]
Wel[6] nyne-and-twenty in a compaignye,[7]
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle[8]
In felaweshipe,[9] and pilgrimes were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.[10]
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed[11] atte beste.[12]
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,[13]
So hadde I spoken with hem[14] everychon,[15]
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,[16]
And made forward[17] erly for to ryse,
To take oure wey, ther as I yow devyse.[18]
But natheless,[19] whil I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,[20]
Me thynketh[21] it acordaunt[22] to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun[23]
Of ech[24] of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren and of what degree,
And eek in what array[25] that they were inne ;
And at a Knyght than wol I first bigynne.

---

1. Happened. 2. Name of tavern. 3. Lodged. 4. Go. 5. Inn. 6. Full· 7, Company. 8, Come together. 9. Fellowship. 10. Wanted to ride. 11. Eased. 12. At the best. 13. Gone to rest. 14, Them. 15. Each one. 16. Immediately. 17. Promised. 18. To the place which I will accurately describe to you. 19. Never. the less. 20. Proceed. 21. It seems to me. 22. According. 23. Rank. 24. Each. 25. Equipment.

It just happened that twenty-nine people arrived at the Tabard Inn in Southewark as I was getting ready to leave for Canterbury on my pilgrimage. All these people —twenty-nine in number had met each other just by coincidence and they had now decided to go to Canterbury all in a company. The rooms and apartments which they were made to live in were quite comfortable. I managed to talk to each one of them and I was immediately admitted to their company. We decided to get up early in the morning and to proceed on to our journey to the place which will later on be described accurately by me.

Before I actually proceed with the story, I feel, I should tell you something about the people who were in the company ; what their social rank was and how each one of them was dressed and equipped. (I think) I shall start first with the Knight.

Inter Chapter One :—

COMMENTS ON THE BEGINNING

(i) Baldwin :

"The eleven lines with which begins. The Canterbury Tales are an elaborate rhetorical dating couched in the high style, and setting of mid-April ("the yonge sonne/ Hath in the Ram his halve cours yronne)" as the date of a realistic fiction-pilgrimage in an undetermined year. Introduced by the subordinate temporal clause "whan that," the first ten lines comprise an inaugural Spring metaphor that, it will be shown, does much more than draw us into the frame of the Tales. Compounded of the immemorial ingredients of the renascence-April and its frost-piercing showers. the mild west wind, the new sun, and the birds—the passage seems partly stylized and seasonal in an aureate troubadour fashion... ....

Albert S. Cook in discussing the first eleven lines of the GF seeks precedent or progenitive passages for them in Virgil, Lucretius, Aeschylus, and others ; he detects special assimilations here to *Georgics* 2 323-333. In these sources there are celebrated the embraces of Heaven and Earth, of Mater Terra and Pater Aether. But is it necessary to turn from the Middle Ages to such classical remoteness for what is an elemental and commonplace theme ?

Skeat traces the inspiration of this section to the opening lines of Book IV of Guido delle Colonne's prose treatise. Historia Trolae, and then goes on to observe that a passage in *Vincent of Beauvals' ; Speculum Naturale*, lib xv c.66, entitled *De Vere*, somewhat resembles Chaucer's beginning. Other parallels have been found, such as the anonymous Latin poem of the second century A. D., *Pervigillium Veneris*. But to comb verses 3-85 of PV and relate a few disparate likenesses to Chaucer's eleven lines is a makeshift compression.

Basically, lines 1-11 are a type of reverdie or "chant of welcome to the Spring." The reverdie could be and had been, from the mediaeval lyrics% Cuckoo Song" and "Alisoun" to Surrey's sonnet. "Description of Spring Wherein Each Thing Renews, Save only the Lover", acclimated to many motifs. However the poet mav apply it, there is always the model reaction to rebirth and renewal. It expresses one of the inherent, spontaneous rhythms of humankind. Certainlv no more plangent note is struck in the mediaeval lyric than the nature pleasance or nature plaint. Furthermore, one can adduce and multiplv such examples from classical, patristic and mediaeval continental literatures, and the attempt to pin any one of them down as at all prototyped for this passage has not so far been convincing ....

In short, spring was variouslv used to express psvchological (and phvsiological), erotic, allegorical and religious reawakenings, and the lover, the glossator, the allegorist, the m stic, even the satirist, again and again employ the counters of spring But it is noteworthy that Chaucer alone made his reverdie the groundsong for a pilgrimage; there is, to mv knowledge, no other such instance in cotinental literature prior to these lines opening The Canterbury Tales :

(1-11) Whan that Aprille with its shoures soote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendered is the flour :
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweet breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth,
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye,
(so priketh hem Nature in hir corages)

That March and April were particularly synchronized with the redeeming rhvthms and that the Easter season was especially imbued with the redemptive mysteries, are facts familiar to all students of mediaeval

life and literature. The solar year was, and is, the vehicle by which the Church expresses Christian redemption A glance at any liturgical calendar will demonstrate that the dates of the great Christian feasts are astronomical in origin, though there were also historical reasons for their choice, because the '›th Calends of January, April, July and October mark the official occurences of the two solstices and two equinoxes according to Roman literature aboot the time of Christ". The celestial and chronic rhythms beat as triumphant cymbals, and symbols, of slavtion, with the progressive dispersal of the darknesses by "*Christus, sol*" Christ, the sun, in the spring of the year.

We have then, behind the conventional spring beginning in mediaeval vernacular literature, an ancient Christian conviction that this time of year was not only the occasion for all natural and human beginnings, but the general date of the Redemption through the sacrifice of Good Friday.

Without historical support, in the Gospels or elsewhere the western world came to accept December 25 as the Nativity because allegorically at the old Roman winter solstice Christ was born into a world of greatest darkness to bring light. So, too, the sacrifice at the crucifixion brought greatest light to the world. The first day in the year when for twenty-four hours the world is flooded with light occurs at the full moon of the vernal equinox."

It is a dependable moment for beginning anything, if we consider the mediaeval mind, and if we consider it from the liturgical point of view at the time of year in which man's chance for salvation is restored to him, it becomes inevitable that "thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages." The Nun's Priest's Tale demonstrates that

Chaucer accepted, or at least regarded as a truism, the conviction of his time as regards Creation in the lines: "When that the month in which the world bigan,/. That highte March, when God first maked man." It is possible that he is thinking of his pilgrimage. "Ready to wenden on my pilgrimage," likewise in the more extensive terms of his own time.

Beginning, Pilgrimage, and regeneration then were for mediaeval man seasonally involved. March and April put a new face on the world, as Golliard said it, "nova mundo reserat/ Facies Aprills"; and man, the microcosm, was tremulous with change, too. For the modern man, however, the same reason has quite anoth r aspect. To compare the openings of the Canterbury Tales and The Wasteland is by no means to define the ethos of either, but since in the twentieth century,

> April is the crullest month, breeding
> Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
> Memory and desire, stirring
> Dull roots with spring rain.................

It is obvious that a conventional literary theme has reappeared in a radically changed tradition. The reverdie in the age of Eliot celebrates the reanimation not of the living but of the dying. The poet is not responsible for, but responds to this mood. Neither Chaucer nor Eliot is doing this all by himself. Neither is "originating" an ethos. Each one bodes forth his own age; giving it form and feature, for in expressing himself he expresses his time. Eliot observe in this propos:

The great poet, in writing himself, writes his time—Thus Dante, hardly knowing it, became the voice of the thirteenth century, Shakespeare hardly knowing it, became the representative of the end of the sixteenth century, of a turning point in history. But you can hardly say that Dante believed, or did not believe, the Thomist Philosophy,

you can hardly say that Shakespeare believed or did not believe, the mixed and muddled scepticism of the Renaissance. If Shakespeare had written according to a better philosophy, he would have written worse poetry; it was h s business to express the greatest emotional intensity of his time, based on whatever his time happened to think."

It is difficult, if not impossible to recapture the attitudes of any era, but those of the Middle Ages especially furnishings of that theocentric epoch make on the whole no sense to the modern, yet the late mediaeval world which Chaucer inhabited had determinable lineaments which should not be blurred in any liberal and liberating attempt to repossess him on this side of the Renaissance, itself a late effloroscence of the mediaeval temper. It was a world which was in rather disturbing contiguity to the supernatural world actual and present to it by prayer, by penance, by the mystic corporeity of those fraternally one in Christ. The City of God was quite as visible quite as "palpable" as the City of London, and, in a sense, more real, London itself was a halfway house for the mediaeval Englishman, the carvanserai of Christ, sheltering overnight, untill the dawn of eternity, the so c-ietas per-egrina on its way to the City of God, to the real estate of this new Jerusalem. The City of God was not a metaphor or pious euphism, but "a reality an assembly and Church with its innumerable hosts of angels not less but more actual than the commonwealth of men." And the only hostelry that welcomed man into this world and released him to the next, was the Church. All the foibles, floutings, blasphemies and malices of its members, of its weak and corrupted humanity, could not gainsay that simple metatemporal. metapolitical fact.

The life of the mediaeval Christian, then, was framed by Creation and Doomsday, the covers for the liber vitae of mediaeval man. It should be no surprise to find that The Canterbury Tales is bound metaphorically, in just that way. It is April, it is springtime, it is beginning, and we have a typical mediaeval aborigine commencement, not with the historical antecedence of Sir Gawain and the Green knight, "After the siege and the assault had come to an end at Troy, but with the inchoative seasonal moral, seasonal-religious metaphor, where the mirror of Nature could not but reflect the divine order.

What begins as the traditional image of artifice operates on a much deeper and more functional scale than is realized at a cursory reading Spring not only " melts " vegetative, and sentient nature.........but stirs the heart of man as well. For Chaucer the stimutation is not so pastourelle, nor to meditation, nor the lover's planctus, but to pilgrimage. The germination and wakening of all greenery and animals have their expansive and reparative effects upon man, too. The surge of spring, however, is deftly localized and made unmistakably English and unmistakably Catholic. This is the signal for the countrywide outpouring of the devout. The palmer or professional pilgrim and the folk "from every shires ende / of England, to Caunterbury they wende", to a shrine where patria is taken up into ecclesia.

The time is solempne in the truly mediaeval festal sense. The "first victory" of the equinoctial sun over the shade of night is a promise of the everlasting splendor of beautitude. Christ is the Light of the World, and to set forth on a pilgrimage in the spring is to walk in the Way and in the Light.

It is therefore possible that the device of the

pilgrimage was not merely a happy plot-strategem to provide a frame for the assembling of characters and the excuse for a story-telling congress. The usual explanation of the frame as an inspired catch all for a series of Faits divers is inadequate, since the mediaeval frame story was apt to be carried on either as a serial, additive, art pour l'art composition, as Singleton has forcefully shown is the case with Boccoccio's Decameron, or as a unified, comprehensive, circular piece of literary art, significative, in short, as Dante's Divina Comoedia undoubtedly is. The balanced composition which yields a sovrasenso has never been urged of The Canterbury Tales, probably because it is left to us both incomplete and disarranged. The triune, almost mathematically precise englobement which goes to make up Dante's Comoedia achieves nearly perfect balance. At the same time, we must observe that the Comoedia is made out of just such serialized fragments and episodes as, disjunctive, disframed, would be mere faits divers. In short, the one is artistically subsumed in the other.

Though a much inferior work of art, *The Canterbury Tales* may be shown to possess, in a rough and unrealised stage, a sovrasenso of its own, one that betrays a certain indecision of growth and an artistic dubiety on the part of Chaucer, but which all in all is there, defined and prepared for, especially in the section intended to come at the end of the Tales. What we may come finally to respect most of all is the subtlety and competence of Chaucer, who in a disordered and unpolished work could leave so many traces of order and a finis that was ineluctably perceived in beginning.

THE KNIGHT

A KNYGHT ther was and that a worthy man,
That fro[1] the tyme that he first bigan
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,[2]
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie,[3]
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,[4]
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,[5]
As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,[6]
And ever honoured for his worthynesse.
At Alisaundre[7] he was whan it was wonne ;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne[8]
Aboven alle nacions in Pruce ;[9]
In Lettow[10] hadde he reysed and in Ruce,[11]—
No cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade[12] at the seege[13] eek hadde he be[14]
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.[15]
At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne and in the Grete See[16]
At many a noble armee[17] hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadee he been fiftene,
And foughten for oure feith at Tramyssene
In lystes[18] thries[19] and ay slayn his foo.[20]
This ilke[21] worthy knyght hadde been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye[22]
Agayn[23] another hethen in Turkye.
And evermoore he hadde a sovereyn prys,[24]
And though that he was worthy ; he was wys,
And of his port[25] as meeke as is a mayde[26]
He never yet no vileynye[27] ne sayde,
In al his lyf, unto no maner wight[28].
He was a verray parfit[29], gentil knyght[30].
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors was goode, but he ne was nat gay[31] ;
Of fustian[32] he wered[33] a gypon[34]
Al bismotered[35] with his haebrgeon[36] ;
For he was lately-come from his viage[37],
And wente for to doon[38] his pilgrymage,

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1. From 2. Chivalry. 3. Courtesy. 4. War. 5. Farther. 6. Heathendom. 7. In Egypt. 8. Sat at the head of the table.

There was a Knight, a most distinguished man and a worthy man. He had followed the ideals of truth, honour, generosity and chivalry from the day he began to ride out on military expeditions. He had done nobly in his sovereign's war and he had ridden in search of adventures far more extensively than any other man in the whole of Christendom and even the pagan countries. He had always been honoured for his noble qualities. He was there at Alexandria when we conquered it. He had often occupied the seat of honour at Prussia. He had been in Lithuania and Russia on military expedition—a feat never so often performed by any other Christian. He had been at Granada, Belmaria; Satalia and Layas. (Not only this). He had been out on many a naval expedition too.

He had participated in (no less than) fifteen battles and had fought thrice in tournaments at Tramisene for the Christian faith—invariably slaying the enemy. Once upon a time the same noble Knight had been with the sovereign of Palatia against a pagan in Turkey. He had always won great admiration and fame, Yet, though he was wise and distinguished and as modest as a madien, he was never rough or coarse towards any person. He was a true, a perfect gentle Knight.

(As for as his equipement). His horse was good but he was not gaily dressed. He wore a fustian tunic which was stained with smudges where his armour had left marks. He had just returned home and joined us to do his pilgrimage.

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9. Prussia. 10. Lithuania. 11. Russia. 12. Granada. 13. 13. Seige. 14. Been. 15. In Africa. 16. The medeterranean. 17. Armed expedition. 18. Tournaments. 19. Thriee. 20. Foe. 21. Same. 22. In Anatolia. 23. Against. 24. Great renown. 25. Bearing. 26. Maid. 27. Speech or behaviour of a rustic. 28. No kind of person. 29. Perfect. 30. Of good birth. 31. Showily dressed. 32. A coarse cloth. 33. Wore. 34. Quilted doublet worn under the coat of mail. 35. Soiled. 36. Coat of mail. 37. Voyage. 38. To make.

Inter Chapter Two :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S KNIGHT

(*i*) **Pollard** : The career of Chaucer's Knight is made difficult to follow by Chaucer's mentioning the scenes of his exploits as they came to his mind. If we put his battles and sieges in their chronological order it will be seen that not only do they fall into groups, but that these groups allow for the Knight taking his fair share of fighting 'in his lordes werre' although Chaucer has only specified campaigns against the infidel. (By Edward III's time the Moors in Spain had been confined to the province of Granada, but here fighting was plentiful). In the north-east of Europe the Teutonic knights had completed their conquest of Prussia and were engaged in a long struggle with the Lithuanians. In the south-east the pressure of the infidel was continually more severe, and the chief centres of resistance were the islands of Rhodes and Cyprus and the attenuated kingdom of Armenia in the angle of Asia Minor. It thus became, we may almost say, 'fashionable' for young knights to make a kind of military 'grand tour', passing from one of the Christian outposts to another. Thus, Henry Duke of Lancaster, had begun his campaigning with the Teutonic knights in Prussia, and went thence to Rhodes and Cyprus, and finally to Granada. To quit England on such a tour it was necessary to obtain the king's leave and this would only be granted, as a rule, in time of peace. Now in January 1343 Edward III, concluded a truce with France for three years, and we must imagine that Chaucer's knight started off at once to fight the Moors, possibly accompanying the aforesaid Henry, Duke of Lancaster, at that time Earl of Derby, who in the spring of the year was sent on a mision to Alphonso XI, of Castile, and took the opportunity of doing a little fighting at the siege of Algeciras (Algezir) in Granada. Henry, however, had to return to England, whereas our knight was at the capture of the town in 1344, and about the same time must have

taken part in raids in 'Belmarye' and 'Tramyssene,' the two provinces in Africa immediately opposite Spain, from which the Moors poured over to Granada to help their kinsmen, passing back again when the tide of war went against them. In May, 1345, the truce with France was declared broken, and we hope that our knight got back again in time to fight the next year at Crecy. For the next fourteen years there was small chance of his obtaining leave to go crusading. But in May, 1360, the treaty of Bretigny (ratified the following October) would set him free again, and he must have hastened at once to the aid of Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, who the following year made a sudden expedition against Attalia (satalie, a town on the coast of Asia Minor, a little to the west of Cyprus, which he captured on August 24th, 1361. King Peter, on the ground of this success, started at once on a round of visits to the courts of Europe whence aid might be expected, coming to England, where Chaucer must have seen a great deal of him, in November, 1363. In England he only stayed some six weeks, but he was in no hurry to return to Cyprus, and it was probably during his absence that our knight went 'with the lord of Palatye Agayn another hethen in Turkye'. At last, in 1365, King Peter was at work again, and the knight was among the numerous Englishmen who took part in the capture of Alexandria. Most of the English men seem to have hastened home with their booty, but the knight must have remained with the king, since he was present at the capture of Lyeys (Lyas, Ayas) in Armenia, in October, 1367. Peter then went to Rome in quest of further aid, and on his return was assassinated on January, 16th, 1369, a tragedy which Chaucer's Monk is made to bewail (Canterbury Tales, B 3581-88). It was then, we may suppose, that the knight transferred his services to the Teutonic order in Prussia, and raided in Lithuania and Russia, for the high honour of times 'beginning the bord' would hardly have been granted to anyone but a veteran. If we choose, we may imagine that these Lithuanian and

Russian raids, which no Christian man of his degree made so often, filled up his time until 1386, the year in which the Lithuanians, much, it is said, to the chagrin of the Teutonic knights, turned Christian, and thus made the war against them no longer attractive on religious grounds. If this were so, our Knight must certainly have been 'lately-come from his viage' when Chaucer met him, for it is about this year that the Prologue must have been written. Of course this reconstruction of the knight's career is quite hypothetical but it has the merit of a good hypothesis in that it takes account of all the facts, and the haphazard way in which Chaucer strings together his exploits really suggests that he was writing down from memory the adventures of an actual knight, which had been told him, without his quite following out their sequence. As it is, the dates of the four sieges he mentions come in the strange order, 1365 (Alisaunder, 1.51), 1344 (Algezir, 1.57), 1367 (Lyeys, 1.58), 1361 (Satalye same line).

(*ii*) **Manly** : "Of all the studies tending to show that in painting the portraits of the Canterbury pilgrims Chaucer worked from living models, the earliest was perhaps the study of Knight which I read before the American Philogical Association in 1908 under the title "A Knight Ther was." The evidence produced did not, to be sure, result in the disclosure of a single individual of whom it could be asserted with confidence that he was the original of the portrait of the knight, but rather in establishing the fact that the career ascribed to the Knight was a possible and natural career and was illustrated even ln minute detail by knights belonging to a family whose members were known to Chaucer and were well-known figures of the day.

In making that study I proceeded upon the assumption that if the Knight were a realistic portrait, recognizable by Chaucer's readers, the original would certainly be a conspicuous figure of the time. Further more, it seemed highly probable that if he were such a person, he would have been called upon to testify in the famous controversy in 1386 between the Scrope and Grosvenor families over the coat

of arms 'azure, a bend or,' which each of them claimed. I therefore carefully examined the careers of the knights who testified in that controversy, with the result just stated. I found that all the campaigns of Chaucer's Knight lay on the borderland between the Christian world and heathendom and were features in the continual crusades of the fourteenth century. The campaigns fell into there grouips: those against the Moors in Spain and northwestern Afraca, those against the Saracens in Egypt and Asia Minor, nnd those against Slavic heathendom in Prussia and Lithuania. In these campaigns, which were among the most outstathd-ing and picturesque events of the time, two members of sele Scrope family—a family in whose behalf Chaucer himssf testified—were prominent figures, and I suggested the possi-bility that the portrait might be a composite portrait of these two men.

This conclusion seemed to be generally accepted until 1916, when Professor Albert S. Cook published in The Transections of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences a paper entitled "The Historical Background of Chaucer's Knight." Professor Cook did not discuss my suggestion in detail, and agreed in the general conclusion that "Chaucer's Knight is a typical, in some sense a composite, figure" He contended, however, that the knights whose careers Chaucer had most definitely in mind were rather the elder earl of Derby, who died as duke of Lancaster, and his grandson, the younger earl of Derby, who died as Henry IV. With a wealth of quotations and illustrative material, some of which I was by space limitations obiiged merely to refer to, and some of which had entirely escaped my attention, Professor Cook contributed greatly to the elucidation and vitalization of our conception of the knight, though I still think that the Scropes fulfilled the conditions of the problem as well as the Derbys, and that Chaucer's Knight belonged rather to the social rank of the Scropes than to the

more exalted rank of the Derbys. In any event, one cannot but be grateful for the illumination of Chaucer's picture furnished by Professor Cook's learned and interesting article.

(iii) **Baldwin**: "THE KNIGHT is all virtue and honor, travel and experience; and we see only his horse and doublet". The career projects the person, and we do not know the knight directly, but only a knight through the composite of the battlestained campaigner; and the Christian military apologist. He is idealized to a point of comlete depersonalization; he stands upon degree, accomplishment, and dedication. The Knight never is Rs he simply takes a nebulous perfection through the aura of the tetrad of chivalric virtues, the repetitious, substantizing play of the word "worthy" (11.43, 47-50, 64, 67) a disproportionate catalogue of battles, his unpretentious horse and worn attire. These add up to the bel ideal of the Christian champion. We meet a knight through the personification of an idealized and already vanished caste."

The Squire

With hym ther was his sone, a young SQUIER,
A lovyere and a lusty[1] bacheler,
With lokkes[2] crulle[3] as they were leyd[4] in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.[5]
Of his stature he was of evene[6] lengthe,
And wonderly[7] delyvere[8] and greet of strengthe ;
And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie,[9]
In Flaundres, in Artoys and Pycardie ;
And born hym weel, as of so litel space,[10]
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded[11] was he, as it were a meede[12]
Al ful of fresshe floures whyte and reede ;
Syngynge he was, or floytynge,[13] al the day ;
He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.
Short was his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde ;
Wel koude[14] he sitte on hors and faire ryde ;
He koude songes make and wel endite,[15]
Juste[16] and eek daunce and weel purtreye [17] and write.
So hoote[18] he lovede that by nyghtertale[19]
He sleep[20] namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.
Curteis[21] he was, lowely[22] and servysable,[23]
And carf[24] biforn his fader at the table.

1. Merry. 2. Curls of hair. 3. Curly. 4. Laid. 5. Guess. 6. Moderate. 7. Wonderfully. 8. Active. 9. Military expedition on horseback. 10. Time. 11. Embroidered. 12. Meadow. 13. Fluting. 14. Could. 15. Compose. 16. Compete in tournament. 17. Portray. 18. Hot. 19. Night time. 20. Slept. 21. Courteous. 22. Humble. 23. Serviceable. 24. Carved.

He had his son with him—a young squire who was a lover and a merry bachelor with locks as curly as if they had been pressed. I think he was of twenty years of age. In height and stature he was of a moderate length. He had physical strength and wonderful agility. He had been out on a military expedition in Flanders, Artois and Picardy and had admirably conducted himself in so little a time thereby hoping to win his lady's favour. He wore an embroidered white and red garment which looked like a meadow full of fresh flowers. He was all the day either singing or playing on the flute. His freshness could be compared with the freshness of May. He had a short gown with long and (rather) wide sleeves. He knew perfectly how to ride a horse. He could make songs and poems and could recite them. He could fight as well as dance, paint, draw and write well He was so passionate a lover that, like the nightingale, he rarely slept during the night. He was humble, courteous and carved to serve his father at the table.

Inter Chapter Three :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S SQUIRE.

(*i*) **Pollard :** An interesting account of the training and duties of squires will be found in Saunders' *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* [Dent, 1889]. After serving from his seventh to his fourteenth year as a page in some noble family a youth received his sword and girdle from the priest's hands at the altar. He might then have assigned to him various duties in the household, or be made personal attendant on his lady, until he was strong enough to follow his lord to the wars. As 'squire of the body' to a knight, he would have to hold his stirrup for him when he preferred to ride on a palfrey, to arm him for battle, and to attend him in the fight. In his lord's house a squire would not only act as carver; but help to entertain his guests, and wait personally on those of high rank.

The Yeman

A Yeman hadde he and servantz namo[1]
At that tyme, for hym liste[2] ride soo ;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.
A sheef of pecock arwes[3] bright and kene,
Under his belt he bar[4] ful thriftily—
Wel koude he dresse his takel[5] yemanly ;
His arwes drouped[6] noght with fetheres lowe—
And in his hand he baar[7] a myghty bowe.[8]
A not-heed[9] hadde he, with a broun visage.
Of woodecraft[10] wel koude he al the usage.[11]
Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,[12]
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,[13]
And on that oother syde a gay daggere,
Harneised[14] wel and sharpe as point of spere ;
A Cristophere[15] on his brest of silver sheene.[16]
An horn he bar, the bawdryk[17] was of grene
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

---

1. None, no more. £. It pleased him. 3. Arrows. 4. Bore. 5. Tackle, bow and arrows. 6. Drooped. 7. Bore. 8. A mighty bow. 9. Shaven head. 10. Forestry. 11. Practice. 12. Guard for the arm used in aschery. 13. Small round shield. 14. Ornamented. 15. St. Christopher, patron saint of foresters. 16. Bright. 17. Belt worn transversely across the chest.

He had only a yeoman with him and no other servants. The yeoman wore a coat and hood of green. He carried carefully with him a bunch of peacock arrows. He could, like a real yeoman, tackle the bow and the arrows.

His arrows never drooped their feathers low and in his hand he bore a mighty bow. His face was brown and his head was like a nut. He knew forestry fairly well. Upon his arms he wore a laced sleeve and by his side he wore a sword and a shield and on the other side a well pointed dagger. On his breast he wore a shining silver medal of St. Christopher. He wore a green belt and he carried a horn with him. He was a true forester, I think.

Inter Chapter Four :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S YEOMAN.

(I) Pollard: Chaucer describes his Yeoman as carrying not only a bow, sword and buckler, which he would do on military service, but also a hunting horn, and guesses that he was a Forester. He had, therefore, plainly not been abroad with the Knight, and we may imagine, in trying to picture how Chaucer thought of things as happening, that the Squire and Yeoman had ridden from some country place to meet the Knight and attend him on the pilgrimage which he was making before returning home. His handsome dagger and silver brooch show that the Yeoman was a man of substance, and while serving the Knight as a forester he would probably hold a farm as well. Modern commentators are agreed that the *Tale of Gamelyn* (the same story of the greenwood as that which Shakespeare used in his *As You Like It*) found in some manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*, was intended by Chaucer, when re-written, to be assigned to the Yeoman. As it is, he tells no story, so there is no picture of him in the Ellesmere manuscript.

The prioresse

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,[1]
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy ;[2]
Hire gretteste ooth[3] was but by seint Loy,
And she was cleped[4] madame Eglentyne.
Ful weel she soong[5] the service dyvyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely[6] ;
And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly[7],
After the scole[8] of Stratford-atte-Bowe.
For Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowe[9].
At mete[10] wel y-taught was she with-alle ;
She leet[11] no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe.
Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel kepe,
That no drope ne fille upon hire breste ;
In curteisie was set ful muchel[12] hir leste[13].
Hire over-lippe wyped she so clene
That in hir coppe[14] ther was no ferthying sene
Of grece[15], whan she dronken hadde hir draughte :

1. The head of a small nunnery. 2. Reserved and quiet. 3. oath. 4. Called. 5. Sang. 6. Elegantly. 7. Neatly, 8. School. 9. Unknown. 10. Meat; food: 11. Let. 12, Much. 13. Desire. 14. Cup: 15: Grease.

There also was a Nun, a Prioress. Her way of smiling was very simple and modest. Her greatest oath was *By St. Loy*. She was known as Madam Eglantine. She sang the service very well with a (rather) nasal voice. She spoke French elegantly (The French she had learnt at Stratford). She knew table etiquette fairly well. She never allowed a morsel to drop from her mouth nor would she ever immerse her fingers too deep in the sauce. Instead she could carry a morsel up very neatly and keep the smallest drop from falling on her breast. She was especially fastidious about courtesies and she would wipe her upper lip so clean that not even a trace of grease could be seen on the cup which she drank from.

THE NUN

Ful semely after hir mete she raughte[1].
And sikerly[2] she was of greet desport[3],
And ful plesaunt and amyable of port ;
And peyned hire[4] to countrefete[5] cheere[6]
Of court, and been estatlich[7] of manere,
And to ben holden of digne[8] of reverence,
But for to speken of hire conscience[9],
She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh[10] a mous
Kaught[11] in a trappe, if it were deed[12] or bledde[13].
Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde
With rosted flessh, or milk and wastel breed[14],
But soore[15] wepte she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte[16].
And al was conscience and tendre herte,

Ful semely hir wympul[17] pynched[18] was ;
Hire nose tretys[19], her eyen greye as glas,
Hir mouth ful smal and ther-to softe and reed ;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed :
It was almoost a spanne brood[20] I trowe[21] ;
For, hardily[22], she was nat undergrowe[23].
Ful fetys[24] was hir cloke[25], as I was war[26] ;
Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar
A peire[27] of bedes, gauded[28] al with grene,
And ther-on heng a brooch of gold ful sheene,
On which ther was first write[29] a crowned A.
And after *Amor vincit amnia*[30].
Another NONNE with hire hadde she,
That was hire chapeleyne[31] and PREESTES thre.

---

1. Stretched out (reached). 2. Certainly. 3. Mirth. 4. Took pains: 5. Imitate. 6. Bearing. 7. Stately. 8. Worthy. 9. Tenderness. 10. Saw. 11. Caught. 12. Dead. 13. Bled. 14. A fine sort of bread. 15. Sorely. 16. Smartly. 17. Wimple (head

In order to eat she reached her hand for the meat very sedately. She was very positively entertaining and very friendly and pleasant in her general behaviour and manners She tried to be oourtly in behaviour, signified in all her dealings and to be really worthy of reverence due to her. She was so sympathetic, kind and generous that she used to weep if she saw a mouse caught in a trap or if it were bleeding. She kept little dogs and gave them roasted flesh, milk, or fine white bread. She wept bitterly in one of them was dead or if somebody hit one of them. She was (in a way) all sentiment and tender heart. Her veil was graceful and elegant. Her nose was elegant and her eyes were glass grey. Her mouth was very small but it was soft and red. She had a broad fair forehead, I must acknowledge. She was by no means short statured. Her cloak, I noticed had a graceful charm about it. She wore a coral trinket on her arm and a set of beads upon which hung a brooch of bright gold on which was inscribed a Latin dictum— Love conquers all.

With her was riding another nun who ,was her Chaplain and three priests.

covering). 18. Closely plaited. 19. Well shaped. 20. Broad, 21. Think. 22. Certainly. 23. Of short stature. 24. Elegant. 25. Cloak. 26. Aware. 27. Pair. 28. Having large beads called gands. 29. Written. 30. Love conquers all. 31. Private secretary.

Inter Chapter Five :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S PRIORESS

(*i*) **Pollard** : "This delicate, precise, and sentimental lady is drawn in the manuscript with a wimple neatly pinched, and a 'fetyse' or handsome cloak, which is black over a tunic of white in conformity to the dress of the Benedictine nuns. On her left hand are the beads, and her right hand is uplifted, as if she was desirous of calling the particular attention of her hearers to what she was reciting, Chaucer, of course, is not bound by the Ellesmere illustrator, but the dress here shown is Augustinian, not Benedictine. Abbots rank with bishops, and an abbess would have been too great a personage to ride in the company that started from the Tabard. Chaucer's Prioress was the head of one of the smaller houses, and as such would have to entertain its guests. For this reason and because girls of well-to do families often rece ved part of their education in nunneries to be able to 'counterfeit the cheer of court' and have stately manners were thought essential qualifications in the head of a nunnery. Many prioresses were ladies of rank, their rank, helping to gain them their position. This was apparently not the case with Chaucer's, or we should have been told of it. So she would be all the more careful for her dignity. Just as Chaucer hints that his lawyer pretended to be busier than he was, so he suggests that there was some little affectation both in his Prioress's religion and in her fine manners. But his satire is very gentle."

(*ii*) **Schoeck** : We must begin with the teller of the Tale, the Prioress herself, and look with some care at Chaucer's portraiture of her. One recent commentrator has declared that the mere fact that she "is one of the Canterbury pilgrims is the first point of satire in a portrait that is satiric", for prohibitions of nuns, going on pilgri-

mage were frequent. Of course, as a prioress, the head of her house, she would have found that a great deal of business took her outside the nunnery.

A gentle woman by birth, yet there is a sense of straining in manner :—

And peyned hire to countrefete cheere
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence. (*GP 139-41*)

Much of the phraseology that colours her portrait is taken deliberately from the medieval romance, particularly when she is said to be "simple and coy". Years ago Professor Lowes pointed out that this phrase set the stage for the many secularizing nuances of the Prioress which fourteenth century readers "must have been quick to gather". Then her very name, Eglentyne, "exquisitely incongruous", for in each of the romances known to the century. "The lady bearing the name of Chaucer's Prioress is a beautiful, romantically worldly figure far removed from a nun." Her sparkling eyes, her small soft mouth, her beautifully broad forehead, her shapely nose—all these attributes are conventional in the cataloguing descriptions of medieval heroines. The point is double : not merely that she is physically attractive, but that the reader should be cognizant of that attraction. The Prioress could not help being beautiful, but the reader is being presented with her attractiveness in the mode of the medieval romance with all its worldliness and sentimentalizing falseness of values.

Her manners are carefully those of polite society, and to the attentive fourteenth century listeners there was subtle but effective irony in Chaucer's evocation, for the manners described are taken from a famous account in the *Roman de la Rose* of what whiles a woman is to use to attract and hold her lover. But what is perhaps the most ironic touch of all, richly ambiguous and controversial, is the breech whose significance is still debated by some Chau-

cerians. Hanging from her rosary, it is of shining gold, engraved with a crowned *A* and the motto *Amor Vincit Omnia*. In the earlier Middle Ages, this originally profane motto had been endowed with a connotation of sacred love, but by the fourteenth century the motto was again employed in its original sense...while of course the sacred connotation was still current. Lowe's questioning of the meaning of this brooch is justly famous :

"Now is it earthly love which conquers all, now heavenly the phrase plays back and forth between the two. And it is precisely that happy ambiguity of the convention-itself that result of an earlier transfer which makes Chaucer's use of it here, as a final summarizing touch, a master stroke, which of the two loves does "amor" mean to the Prioress ? I do not know ; but I think she thought she meant love celestial."

One may wish to be chivalrous to the Prioress, but (and this is really the issue) how did Chaucer's audience see her ? At the moment of their first viewing her in the narrative dramatic, there was no certitude but only ambiguity ; from the first hint in "simple and coy" of the discord between the woman and the man so subtly suggested by the two contradictory sets of associations to the summarizing touch of the magnificently ambiguous brooch, we have a nun who is something less than the fulfilment of the spiritual ideal.

One final point :

But for to speken of hire conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde
With rosted flessh, or milk and wastel breed,
But soore wepte she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte,
And al was conscience and tendre herte. (*GP* 142-50)

In Middle English "conscience" had our primary denotation) the faculty which pronounces upon the moral quality of one's actions or motives). but also the secondary meaning, now largely lost, of "tenderness of feeling"; both meanings are bound up in Chaucer's use of the word here. "To speken of hir conscience"—to speak of her conscience, Chaucer says, but we get nothing of her moral faculty, only her emotional tenderness. Moreover, the object of that tenderness, of her "charitable" nature, is not the neighbour but pets ; and there seems little disputing that it was contrary to ecclesiastical regulations for a nun to have such pets as the Prioress's "little dogs" (though earlier, to be sure, such religious as those addressed in the *Ancrene Riwle* were permitted them. TheDominion Bromyard, late fourteenth century theologian of Cambrid e thundered from his pulpit against the wealthy who indulged themselves in pampered pets, especially at a time when food was scarce. One may well ask what kind of "charity" it is that Chaucer chose to describe as lavished on animals. The point is not (as one scholar has suggested recently) that this is "the sort of woman who would weep even over a dead mouse or a whipped dog"; it is that she weeps only over such sentimentalized suffering and apparently ignores the human suffering and apparently ignores the human suffering so prevalent around her. It is that warped quality, as we shall see, which dominates her tale.

Only thus far does Chaucer go in the *Prologue.* but with superbly controlled irony and devastating tact he has contrived to leave shadows of doubts, several kinds of uncertainty, and some strong implications about the Prioress in the mind of his audience. Beyond that, at this stage of Chaucer's developing portrait of this religious woman, we cannot declare.

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S PRIORESS'S CHAPLAIN OR SECOND NUN

(iii) **Pollard :** 'This Nun relates the history which is called in the *Canterbury Tales* the Second Nonnes Tales. There is accordingly in the manuscript a very neat miniature of her in a dark habit with open sleeves ; her wimple is nicely plated ; her hood or cowl is up, not hiding, however, her face ; and her waist is girded.' As regards the statement that she was the Prioress's Chaplain, the *New Eng, Dict*, explains 'chaplain' here as 'a nun who recites the inferior services in the chapel of a nunnery,' but the explanation seems of doubtful correctness and not to the point. Chaucer does not say that the nun was the chaplain of the Priory, but that she was the chaplain of the Prioress, and the duty of the chaplain of a Benedictine Prioress or Abbess is now, and presumably was then, to wait upon her Superior both in and out of chapel, just as the duty of a Bishop's chap'ain is to attend on the Bishop. Such attendance would, of course, be more especially needed when the Prioress was travelling. Thus Bishop Alcock in his Abbaye of the Holy Ghost says that Charity was made an Abbess and to her Mercy and Truth were to be as Chaplains going about with her wherever she went. In the Customary of St. Augustine's Canterbury (edited by Sir E. M. Thompson for the Henry Bradshow Society, 1902) there is an amusing section on the duties of an Abbot's two chaplains. Among these duties were to foster goodwill between the abbot and the monks, to accompany the abbot out of doors, to save him from small matters of business with which they could deal, to see to his houskeeping and especially to the supply of wine, to keep his jewels and see that he had always at least ten pounds in ready money, to distribute his alms and look after his guests. The same sort of duties would have to be performed in a nunnery, and obviously formed the business of the Prioress's Chaplain. In her Woman under Monasticism Miss Lina Eckenstein notes (pp. 376 sq.) that

'In consequence of an Episcopal visitation (1478) of the Benedictine convent of Easebourne injunctions were sent to the prioress, one of which directs that 'every week, beginning with the eldest she shall select for herself in due course, and in turns one of her nuns as chaplain (capellanissam) for divine service and to wait upon herself' (Blaauw, Episcopal Visitations of the Bendictine Nunnery of Easebourne, Sussex Arch. Collections, vol i.p. 15) 'In Redingfeld at the visitation of 1514, the complaint is made against the prioress that she does not change her chaplain' (Jessopp, Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich, 149- 1532, p. 138). The object of the weekly rota of chaplains was, no doubt, to prevent favouritism and jealousy:

(*vi*) **Manly**: I had intended to discuss only the Prioress and the Wife of Bath in this lecture, but the attendants of the Prioress are such shadowy figures in the Prologue that the inclusion of them can hardly violate the canons of unity It is clear that Chaucer himself had formed no very definite conception of the Second Nun. All he has to say about her in the Prologue is the very natural statement, long a puzzle but now well understood, that she was chaplain, that is, a sort of private secretary and general assistant, to the Prioress And it does not appear that he ever achieved any clear idea of her person or character. Therefore he left the one and a half lines of the sketch unfinished and when she tells her tale, he allows her to do so without a word of introduction or comment. He merely says:

Whan ended was the Lyf of Seint Cecile,
Er we hadde riden fully fyve mile
At Boghton under-Flee, us gan atake
A man that clothed was in clothes blake.

Inter Chapter Six :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S NUN'S PRIEST

(i) **Pollard** : "In the talks on the road, after the Monk's flow of tragedies had been stopped.

> *"Thanne spak oure Hoost with rude speche and bold,*
> *And seyde unto the Nonnes Preest anon*
> *"Come ner, thou preest, com hyder thou "Sir John".*
> *Telle us swich thyng as may oure hertes glade.*
> *Be blithe, though thou ryde upon a jade—*
> *What though thyn hors be bothe foule and lene ?*
> *If he wol serve thee, rekke nat a bene," etc.*

This mention of 'the Nonnes Priest' and the fact that the whole number of pilgrims is raised from twenty nine (l. 24) to thirty one, if there were three as here stated, suggests that Chaucer wrote this couplet in forgetfulness of his general scheme and omitted to reconcile them. It is the Priest who tells the story of the "Fox and the Cock, an excellent example of Chaucer's final style."

(ii) **Manly** :—Of the Nun's Priest also Chaucer had, I think, when he wrote the *Prologue*, no very clear conception, though, for reasons which will be given very soon, he even then planned to have only one. But he did later achieve a very delightful conception of the Priest, which he has conveyed to his readers with marvellous skill, partly through a few lines of conversation between Priest and Host, but still more, it would seem, by the character and quality of the tale told by him. It was perhaps when he conceived the Priest in such form and character and gave him the tale which has immortalized that Chaucer felt obliged to change his original conception of the Monk and transform him from the splendid worldy scorner of labour and books whom we know in the *Prologue* to the sad

faced pedant with a hundred tragedies in his cell who greets our astonished ears when the Host calls upon him to tell his tale

The discussion in ragard to the puzzling "prestes thre" would, probably, have taken a different turn, had more care been exercised to learn precisely the relations of priests to convents of nuns. There is no ground for maintaining that three priests were attached to the convent of St. Leonard's at Stratford-atte-Bowe. The evidence which we have, bears out the statements made by Fosbroke on the authority of Lyndwood. The nun's confessor, he says, was appointed by the bishop, and unless otherwise specified was the incumbent of the parish. Certainly the only priest with whom the nuns of Startford seem to have had official relations was the parish priest. You will recall the mention of the incumbent of 1375 in the will of the Countess Elizabeth. "I bequeath," she says, "to Sir Geoffrey, parish priest (capell paroch) three and a half yards of blanket, "and she names him as the first of the executors of her will. The benefice of the church of Bromley was a curacy, and the atlvowson always belonged to the convent or nunnery of St. Leonard's. The Nun's priest, therefore, was apparently not a priest specially assigned to residence in the nunnery, but the priest of the parish, who had official relations with the nunnery as confessor. So small a convent as that of St. Leonard's, which at the time of its foundation and at the time of Henry VIII's survey had only nine nuns, would certainly not have required the services of more than one confessor. The apparent youth of the Nun's Priest makes it very unlikely that he was the Geoffery de Neunton who in 1375 was executor of the will of Elizabeth of Hainaut. I have been unable to discover who were Geoffrey's immediate successors in the parish.

All the evidence of all kinds is, in fact, strongly against the correctness of the reading "Priests thre" which appears in all the manuscripts. Nowhere else in the *Canterbury Tales* is there mention of more than one priest. There is no need for more than one, and if there be only one, Chaucer's

statement that there were "nine and twenty" pilgrims assembled at the Tabard is accurately correct. Morever, it is to be observed that the Second Nun and the Nun's Priest or Priests are the only characters in the Prologue who are left entirely undescribed. The most reasonable hypothesis seems to be that Chaucer had intended to supply portraits of the Second Nun and the priest but had got no further with this plan than the words :

Another Nonne with hire hadde she,
That was hire Chapeleyne............

What were his reasons for stopping at this point, whether he felt unprepared at the moment to paint a portrait of another nun. or whether, as has just been suggested, he had not yet decided upon the models for Second Nun and the Priest, we shall doubtless never know But it seems reasonably certain that he did intend to present portraits of the Second Nun and the Nuns' Priest, that this plan was left unexecuted, and the manuscript, left incomplete at this point, was filled out by some thoughtless person who, to secure a rhyme, filled out the line with the words "and prestes thre."

I will add only a brief comment on a matter ot detail and then turn to a more substantial figure. Commentators agree in informing us that when in the closing lines of his tale the Nun's priest quotes an habitual saying of his lord's he is referring to the Archbishop of Canterbury. This statement is based upon fifteenth century gloss ; but the parish of Bromley was in the diocese of London and the archdeaconry of Middlesex, and the Priest's lord was the Bishop of London, who at that time was Robert Braybroke. Elizabeth of Hainaut's will, as we saw, was probated in the commissary court of Bishop of London. This is the conclusive evidence, but there has never been any occasion for doubt in the matter.

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THE MONK

A MONK ther was, a fair for she maistrie[1],
An outridere[2], that lovede venerie[3];
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee[4] hors hadde he in stable;
And whan he rood men myghte his brydel heere
Gynglen[5] in a whistlynge wynd[6] als cleere,
And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel belle,
Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle[7].
The reule[8] of seint Maure[9] or of seint Beneit[10],
By-cause[11] that it was old and som del[12] streit[13],—
This ilke Monk leet olde thynges pace[14],
And heeld after the newe world the space[15].
He yaf[16] nat of that text a pulled[17] hen
That seith that hunters beth nat hooly men,
Ne that a Monk whan he is cloysterles
Is likned til[18] a fissh that is waterles;
This is to seyn, a Monk out of his cloystre.
But thilke[19] text heeld he nat worth an oystre;
And I seyde his opinioun was good.
What sholde[20] he studie and make hymselven wood[21],
Upou a book in cloystre alwey to poure[22],
Or swynken[23] with his handes and laboure,
As Au·tyn bit[24]? how shal the world be servéd?
Lat Austyn have his swynk to him reserved.

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1. In the highest degree. 2. Steward. 3. Hunting. 4. Choice. 5. Jingle. 6. As. 7. Monastry. 8. Rule. 9. St. Maur. 10. St. Benet. 11. For the reason. 12. Somewhat. 13. Strict. 14. pass. 15. Course. 16. Gave. 17. Plucked. 18. To. 19. Such. 20. For what reason. 21. Mad. 22. Pore over (study closely). 23. Toil. 24. Bids.

(Then) There was a Monk who was one of the finest of his kind. He liked to roam about in the country and hunting was his favourite sport. He was a really manly man who might have made a real good abbot. He had quite a few nice horses in his stable. When he rode his bridle tingled as clearly and loudly as the chapel bell. This monk allowed the order of St. Maure or the order of St. Benet as something out-moded. He preferred to follow the new and the modern. He bothered his head little about the scriptural text that says that hunters are not holy men and that an uncloistered monk is merely a fish out of water. He did not care even a fig for such a text. I think his views were sound and agreeable. Why should he study and burn the midnight oil over books, as St. Augustine asks ? Did it mean any service to the world ? Let Augustine be left alone with his labours.

Therefore he was a prikasour[1] aright ;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel in flight .
Of prikyng[2] and of huntyng for the hare
Was al his lust[3], for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh[4] his sleves y-purfiled[5] at the hond
With grys[6], and that the fyneste of a lond[7] ;
And for to festne[8] his hood under his chyn[9]
He hadde of gold y-wroght[10] a curious pyn ;
A love-knotte[11] in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled[12] that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face, as he dadde been enoynt[13].
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt[14] ;
His eyen stepe[15] and rollynge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys[16] of a leed[17] ;
His bootes souple[18], his hors in greet estaat[19],
Now certeinly he was a fair prelaat.
He was nat pale, as a forpyned[20] goost[21] :
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey[22] was as broun[23] as is a berye :

1. Hard rider. 2. Tracking the hare not by scent but by foot-prints. 3. Pleasure. 4. Saw. 5. Pruned and trimmed. 6. A kind of fur. 7. The finest in the country. 8. Fasten. 9. Chin. 10. Made of gold. 11. A twisted loop. 12. Bald. 13. Anointed. 14. Condition. 15. Bright. 16. Furnace. 17. Lead. 18. Supple. 19. Condition. 20. Wasted. 21. Ghost. 22. Saddle horse. 3. Brown.

The monk therefore perferred to be a good rider. He had greyhounds with him that were as swift as birds. For him the fun lay in riding at a fence or hunting a hare. I saw his sleeves were garnished at the hand with the finest available fur in the country.

He had an elaborately made golden pin which was meant to fasten his hood under his chin and at the larger end there was a lovers's knot. His head was bald which was like a looking glass. His face shone as if he had been anointed. He was a perfect lord, fat and fashionable His prominent eyeballs never seemed to settle and they seemed to glitter like the flames beneath a kettle. His boots were supple and his horse was in fine condition. He was a prelate worth an exhibition. He was not pale like a tormented soul. He liked a fat roasted swan best. His horse was as brown as a berry.

Inter Chapter Seven :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S MONK

(i **Pollard :** The best proof that Chaucer's sketch of the hunting monk is not exaggerated is the fact that all the chief points he mentions are to be found in the articles of the 'Visitation of Selborno Priory' held by William of Wykecham, as Bishop of Winchester, in 1387, i.e. within a year, or two at the most, of the date when Chaucer must have written his Prologue. [The articles are printed in full in an Appendix to Gilbert White's Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne, and summarized in his text, from which we may be content to quote. Thus for the whole character of the Monk, cp. White's "In Item eleventh the good bishop is very worth with some of the Canons, whom he finds to be professed hunters and sportsmen, keeping hounds, and publicly attending huntingmatches These pursuits, he says, occasion much dissipation, danger to the soul and body, and frequent expense ; he, therefore, wishing to extirpate this vice wholly from the convent, 'radicibus extirpare,' does absolutely enjoin the canons never intentionally to be present at any public noisy tumultuous huntings ; or to keep any hounds, by themselves or by others, openly or by stealth, within the convent or without." The penalty for each of fence was to be two days fasting on bread and beer. The sixth article "mentions that several of the canons are found to be very ignorant and illiterate. and enjoins, the prior to see that they be better instructed by a proper master," and the thirty fourth bids them to sit in the cloister and read the Scriptures (cp. II. 104 sq). In the eighty sixth article the canons are accused of refusing to accept of their statutable clothing year by year and of demanding a certain specified sum of money, presumably in order to buy with it what clothes they pleased. In the twenty-ninth the result of his system is seen in the prohibition of "foppish ornaments and the affection of appearing

like beaux with garments edged with costly furs (cp. 1. 193. sq.), with fringed gloves, and silken girdles trimmed with gold (cp our Monk's gold pin and silver.") In the twenty sixth the canons are severely reprimanded for appearing publicity in fancy boots, "contra consuetudinem antiquam ordinis supradicti in perniciosum exemplum et scandalum plurimorum," so that the care which the monk bestowed on his 'bootes souple' (1. 203) was probably misapplied. Lastly we find the case of outrider, such as he was (1.166), dealt with in the ninth article, which complains that "some of the canons are given to wander out of the precincts of the convent without leave; and that others ride to their manors and farms under pretence of inspecting the concerns of the society, when they please, and stay as long as they please. But they are enjoined never to stir either about their own private concerns or the business of the convent without leave from the prior; and no canon is to go alone, but to have a grave brother to accompany him."]

THE MONK

Having established the point that Chaucer is preoccupied with presenting a monastic official and not a cloisterer on a holiday, we are in a position to examine the Monk's views and attitudes. In the presentation in the General Prolouge Chaucer's fiction is that he is reporting the salient points of an intimate conversation which is as much the Monk's apologia for his job and personal inclinations as the Wife of Bath's prologue to her tale is an apologia for her vocation as oft-wedded wife and for her inclinations. The difference is that nobody could have presumed to telescope her arguments. In both presentations, however, Chaucer makes the character argue that he or she is within the letter of the law, but with the subtle implications that in practice the points may be stretched. The wife should not be thinking so much about the succe ding husband untill the current one is dead. Now the conversation of the Monk appears to have made points like the following, though not necessarily in the same order; and although my statement of them makes the Monk appear argumentative

and more respectful of the past and the Rule than Chaucer's few choice remarks do, we must imagine a longer conversation from which those choice tidbits were extracted, if we are to understand the Monk's position :

I am an outrider, sir, and therefore I travel a good deal. It is true that the Rules of St. Benedict and St. Maure are old and therefore strict, but centuries have passed since they were written and times and social conditions have changed. I believe that adaptations of the Rule to new conditions always have to be made. Take the rule of claustration in my case. Some folks will quote the old saw. "A monk out of the cloister is like a fish out of water ; it's not worth an oyster ; it misses the point. Why, even the constitutions of the General Chapter of 1351 made Manual labour as St. Augustine bids ? That, Sir, was all right for him and the ancient monks of his time, but it does'nt take into consideration the agricultural and other advances of our day. Let Augustine have his manual labour reserved for himself. Supervisory work is still necessary nowadays ; that's my labour.........No, the monks at the monastery are not idle. In place of manual labour, according to their talents most are variously occupied with study, reading, or work in the scriptorium-copying, correcting, illuminating, glossing, or binding books. The library is always in need of new books or additional copies of old ones ; some service books have to be replaced occasionally ; and of course some books are made to be sold. Good business, you know.........Me a scholar ? Why should I drive myself made poring over a book in the cloister ? My talents lie in another direction, and they are used for the good of the monastery. I have already said that I am an outrider and spend most of my time away from the cloister overseeing manors or travelling between them......Certainly I hunt, I consider it a part of my job to keep up good public relations with the local gentry or the visiting nobility by hunting with them. And I really enjoy it ; but if you have enjoyable work, why not enjoy it ? As for the saying that hunters are not holy men, it proves nothing—a mere slogan. Somebody has to look after such matters. If our

good neighbours and patrons come to hunt, I entertain them with hunt and not with chapel service. How shall the world be served ?..............Sure it's expensive. But you, sir, as a businessman know that you have to spend money to make money. Hunting pays off in benefactions. But if you are going to hunt with such folk you may as well do things right, and also be able to take a hedge with the best hunter among them

Such a line of argument made good business sense, and Chaucer was the first to say so : "And I seyde his opinion was good." And what fund raiser or public relations officer of an American University would not say the same ? Just as the Friar is the beggar in his house, so too is the Monk the best outrider business official-in his community ; he understands the value of public relations. The deeper criticism is merely implied. The Monk has made his Job his way of life and not monasticism. Although he was upper class dignity, he has no asceticism, no detachment whatsower, and he is as worldly in his fashion as the Wife of Bath is in hers. Both are rationalizing an extreme position and they argue well. That is why it is fun to follow his summarized defense of the pursuit of the hare and her verbose defense of the pursuit of succeeding husbands.

Because so much is made of the Monk's hunting further consideration of the sports might be useful. The mediaeval prohibition of hunting by clerics is still preserved in Canon 138 of the Code of Canon Law of today. The hunting envisaged is the chase, riding to horn and hounds, a social fox hunt for example. In the middle Ages the chase or such hunting was a common sport of nobles and the wealthy, in effect, peasants or the poor out for a little fresh meat were not hunters but poachers. Clerics (monks included) were forbidden to indulge in the hunt because it was unbecoming their station in life They were to live as poor and spiritual men, but hunting was expensive, fashionable, and worldly.

Incidentally, a similar reason is given in the statutes of 1400 for New College, Oxford for forbidding its scholars and fellows to keep a rabit warren, a dog, ferrets, or any type of hunting bird" because it is not fitting for the poor, especially those who live on alms, to give the bread of the children of men to dogs to eat."

Among clerics the temptation to hunt was greater for the upper ranks of monks and canons, that is, for the superiors and officials. Often enough they had, as I have implied, the reasonable excuse of good public relations with the nobility and neighbouring gentry. They also had easy access to the means of hunting...large estates and good horses since the great abbeys conducted large scale commercial farming and sheep raising operations. On the other hand, one of the lower ranks, a cloisterer, would have had difficulty requisitioning a proper mount, even if he had given himself for the nonce a dispensation to hunt. In spite of drawbacks, the fascination of the sport might still get the better of some clerics in the lower ranks. At any rate, John Peckham learned on a visitation that the prior and cannons of St. Augustine at Coxford followed the hounds on foot. This conjures up a picture of them joining a party of hunters who crossed their land, which could be as amusing a burlesque of the hunt as The Tournament of Tottenham is of the knighty journey. To correct a very undignified situation, Peckham assuming his full dignity as metropolitan and primate of all England, on 10 January, 1281, wrote a letter of injunctions to the prior who had failed to correct delinquents prevent scandal, and confine to the discipline of the cloister those cannons prone to galavanating (ad gyrovagationem poonas) "Wherefore," he says, "throughout the land scandal and ridicule arise from your subjects, because through your negligence, by running after the hounds, attending the feasts, talking to maidservants, they make of their religious profession a laughing stock." Nevertheless, Peckham recognizes that there might be occasions when the prior himself would have a legitimate reason for hunting—but if he is going to hunt, he should do it right. "Although we wish you to guard your full liberty to hunt, we are unwilling for you or anyone of yours to

follow the hounds on foot, but on horseback only, lest the opportunity for frivolity and suspect diversion be offered ; nor do we permit any canon to indulge in this exercise unless when he accompanies the prior indulging in such at the time". In this action Peckham tries to preserve three things : the dignity of the religious life, the position of the prior before a secular society, and the dignity of the English hunt. This is all the more remarkable because Peckham in the same stern letter forbade the game of chess and "other like disputable amusements."

In a society, which was still largely feudal it was impossible for superiors in charge of large monastic establishments to ignore the sport liked by so many of their lords and benefactors. No one wants to offend benefactors, past, present, or possible. Of the great Thomas de la Mare, abbot of St. Alban's 1349—1396, his chronicler wrote that he fled hawking and hunting like the plague. Yet he still had hunters and hawkers from among the guards and other members of his household to keep up his warren, to keep down destructive beasts and birds, and to amuse his lords and friends. "But he would not permit them to practise their art in his presence, or the monks to participate in any way, except monks officially deputed to do so This seemed very difficult but the more meritorious for him because when he was a young layman he had been very practised in such things."

—**Beichner P.E.**

The Friar

A Frere ther was, a wantowne[1] and a merye[2],
A lymytour[3], a ful solempne[4] man.
In alle the orders foure is noon that kan[5]
So moche of daliaunce[6] and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen at his owene cost :
Unto his ordre he was a noble post[7].
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns[8] over al in his contree,
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun ;
For he hadde power of confessioun,
As seyde hym-self, moore than a curat[9],
For of his ordre he was licenciat[10].
Ful swetely herde[11] he confessioun,
And plesaunt was his absolucioun[12].
He was an esy man to yeve penaunce[13]
There as he wiste to have a good pitaunce[14] ;
For unto a poure[15] ordre for to yive[16]
Is signe that a man is wel y-shryve[17] ;
For, if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt[18]
He wiste[19] that a man was repentaunt :
For many a man so harde is of his herte
He may nat wepe al—thogh hym soore smerte[20].
Therfore, in stede of wepynge and preyeres
Men moote[21] yeve[22] silver to the poure freres.
His typet[23] was ay farsed[24] full of knyves
And pynnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
And certeinly he hadde a murye note[25] ;
Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote[26].
Of yeddynges[27] he baar outrely[28] the pris[29] ;
His nekke whit was as the flour-de-lys[30] ;
Ther-to[31] he strong was as a champioun[32].
He knew the tavernes well in every toun,
And everich hostiler and tappestere[33]
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere[34] ;

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1. Riotous. 2. Merry. 3. A friar licensed to beg within a certain area. 4. Solemn. 5. Know. 6. Light talk. 7. Pillar.

There was a Friar who was a wanton and a merry man. He was a limiter and a very serious man. Of all the four orders there is none more elegant in light talks than he. He fixed up many a marriage and gave each of his young women whatever he could give them. He was a noble pillar to his order. Within his boundary, he was very thick and intimate with the countryfolk and with rich and respectable women of the town. He was qualified to hear confessions—and at least that is what he said. He said that he had a special licence from the Pope. He heard confessions sweetly and gave absolutions pleasantly. He was lax in giving penance.

When he thought that there was scope for some good food since (he thought) that to give freely to friars (itself) meant absolution. If the penitent gave freely, he would say that he had repented with all his sincerity. There are many people who cannot weep though they feel anguished within their hearts and, therefore, the best thing was (the Friar thought) to give silver (and gold) to the poor friars (as an alternative). His cap was always stuffed with knives and pins to be given to pretty women. His voice was gay and sturdy. He sang admirably and played the hurdy-gurdy nicely. At sing-songs he always made a mark. His neck was whiter than a lily flower but he was strong enough also, much like a prize-frighter. He was acquainted with taverns in every town and every inn-keeper and barmaid too—he knew them better than he knew lepers and beggars.

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8. Land owners of free, but not noble birth. 9. Parish priest 10. One licensed by the Pope. 11. Heard. 12. Absolution. 13. Penance. 14. Allowance. 15. Poor. 16. Give. 17. Shriven. 18. Boast. 19. Knew. 20. He feels pain keenly. 21. One ought to. 22. Give. 23. Cap. 24. Stuffed. 25. Merry voice. 26. Portable harp. 27. Song. 28. Entirely. 29. Prize. 30. Lily. 31. More over. 32. Prize-fighter. 33. Barmaid. 34. Begger-woman.

For unto swich[1] a worthy man as he
Acorded[2] nat, as by his facultee[3],
To have with sike[4] lazars aqueyntaunce;
It is nat honeste[5], it may nat avaunce[6],
For to deelen with no swich poraille[7];
But al with riche and selleres of vitaille[8].
And over al, ther as profit sholde arise,
Curteis he was and lowely of servyse:
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous[9].
He was the beste beggere in his hous[10];
For thogh a wydwe[11] hadde noght a sho[12],
So plesaunt was his *In principio*[13],
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng er[14] he wente:
His purchas[15] was wel bettre than his rente,
And rag· he[16] koude, as it were right a whelpe.
In love-dayes[17] ther koude he muchel helpe,
For there he was nat lyk a cloysterer
With a thredbare cope, as is a poure scolor,
But he was lyk a maister[18], or a pope;
Of double worstede was his semycope[19],
That rounded as a belle out of the presse[20].
Somwhat he lipsed[21] for his wantownesse[22],
To make his English sweet upon his tonge,
And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe[23],
His eyen[24] twynkled in his heed aryght[25]
As doon[26] the sterres in the frosty nyght.
This worthy lymytour[27] was cleped[28] Huberd.

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1. Such. 2. Suited. 3. Position. 4. Sick. 5. Respectable. 6. Profitable 7. Poor people. 8. Provisions. 9. Able. 10. Monastic house. 11. Widow. 12. A small coin. 13. In the beginning. 14. Before. 15. Gain by begging. 16. Behave wantonly. 17. Days of arbitration. 18. Person in authority. 19. Short cope. 20. Mould. 21. Lisped. 22. Affectation. 23. Sung. 24. Eyes. 25. Right. 26. Do. 27. Limiter. 28. Called.

He was a dignified man and it was below his dignity to be acquainted with wretched lepers. It was neither respectable, nor dignified nor profitable. But he was most polite and courteous to all the rich people and with anybody who might prove to be of some profit to him. In such matters he was easily the best man. He was the finest beggar of his batch. Even though a widow had no coin, she gave him something before he departed ; so pleasant was his how—d' ye—do. His income in this way was much larger than his regular wages. He behaved as wantonly as a puppy. He was always prompt in settling disputes for a small fee on the days of arbitration when he would appear as a person in authority and not as a poor scholar : he would appear rather as a Pope or as a Doctor. The semi-cope upon his shoulders was of double-worsted which stood out like a bell out of the mould. He lisped a little out of wantonness in order to make his English sweet upon his tongue. When he had played his harp or when he had sung a song his eyes would twinkle in his head as brightly as a star upon a frosty night. It appeared as if his name was Hubert.

Inter Chapter Eight :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S FRIAR

(1) POLLARD :....... "there were at this time four orders of Friars in England :

(i) Franciscans Founded by S. Francis of Assissi in 1208, these came to England in 1224, and thirty two years afterwards already possessed forty-nine convents in this country.

(ii) Dominicans, Founded by S. Dominicans at Toulouse in 1215, as a preaching order to combat the heresy then prevalent in the south of France. They came to England in 1220.

(iii) Carmelites. Originally a monastic order on Mount Carmel. When driven out by the Mohammadans they spread over Europe, and in 1247, when they had an Englishman as their General, were changed into a mendicant order.

(iv) Augustinians. An order of uncertain origin on which the "Rule of St. Augustine" (see note to l. 187) was imposed by Innocent IV (d. 1254).

The movement started by S. Francis of Assisi remained throughout the thirteenth century a great religious force, attracting to itself all that was most earnest and unselfish in the religious life of the time. The Friars were not, like the monks, to flee from the world, but to mix with it and convert it. They were essentially missionaries, both for home and abroad, and their vow of poverty was intended to bind them collectively as well as individually. By Chaucer's time their churches and houses were as splendid as those of the monks and were supported by the shameless begging of which the poet gives a picture in the Summoner's Tale. Here a friar first excites the people in church :

> *"to yeve for Goddes sake*
> *Wherwith men mighte holy houses make,"*

and then

"Whan folk in chirche had yeve him what hem lest
He went his wey no lenger wolde he reste.
With scrippe and tipped staf y tukkea hye,
In every hous he gan to poure and prye,
And beggeth mele, and chese, or elles corn.
His felawe hadde a stafe tipped with horn,
A peyre of tables al of a yvory,
And a poyntel polysshed fetisly,
And wroie the names alwey vs he stood
Of alle folk that yaf hym any good,
Ascaunces that he wolde for hem prey.
'Yif us a busshel whete, malt or reye,
A Goddes kechyl or a trype of chese.
Or elles what yow lyst, we may nat cheese ;
A Goddes halfpeny, or a masse peny.
Or yif us of youre brawn, if ye have eny ;
A dagoun of youre blanket, leeve dame,
Oure suster deere – lo heere I write youre name,
Bacoun, or beef or swich thyng as ye fynde.'
A sturdy harlot wente ay hem bihynde,
That was hir hostes man. and bar a sak,
And what men yaf hem leyde it on his bak.
And whan that he was out at dore anon,
He planed awey the names everichon
That he biforn had writen in his tables."]

The picture of Friars which Chaucer gives in these lines and in the Prologue is in accordance with the allusions in many other writers of the time. On the other hand many individual friars may have still retained some of the merits as well as the defects of a low-class clergy, and Wyclif, who, at the end of his life, assailed them bitterly, had at one time contrasted them, favourably with the tithe-taking clergy. But about the time Chaucer wrote they must have been specially unpopular, as in 1385, in consequence of riots in which their houses were pulled down, a proclamation had to be issued for their protection.

The Merchant

A Marchant was ther with a forked[1] berd,
In motteleye[2], and hye on horse he sat;
Upon his heed a Flaundryssh bevere hat;
His bootes clasped faire and fetisly;
His resons[3] he spak ful solempnely,
Sownynge[4] alway thencrees of his wynnyng.
He wolde the see[5] were kept for[6] any thing
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes[7] selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit[8] bisette[9],
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette[10],
So estatly was he of his gouvernaunce[11],
With his bargaynes and with his chevyssaunce[12].
For sothe he was a worthy man with-alle[13],
But, soothe to seyn[14], I noot[15] how men hym calle.

---

1. Having two points. 2. Motley (striped clothing). 3. Arguments. 4. Talking loudly. 5. Sea. 6. Against. 7. French coins. 8. Intelligence. 9. Employed. 10. Debt. 11. Management. 12. Money lending. 13. Moreover. 14. To tell the truth. 15. Know not.

There was a Merchant also with a pointed beard and a motley dress. High he sat on his horse and upon his head he wore a Flemish beaver hat and on his feet he had elegantly buckled boots. He talked in a very solemn note and he liked to tell people how he never lost in business. He thought that the sea must be kept free upon the Harwich Holland range and he was an expert at currency exchange. The Merchant so cunningly used his intelligence that nobody knew that he was in debt. He was always stately in all his negotiations. He was over all an excellent man, however. To tell the truth I do not know his name.

Inter Chapter Nine :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S MERCHANT

Professor Alfred W. Pollard. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales : The Prologue, Macmillan and Co; London.

The Ellesmere picture of the Merchant shows him in his 'motte eye' dress of red, lined with blue, and embroidered with blue and white flowers,—perhaps rather a gayer dress, and with more fashionable boots than Chaucer intended. From the mention of Middelburgh (see quotation from Prof. Hales ir note to l. 277) it is probable that he was a Merchant of the Staple, and engaged not merely in island but in foreign trade. The Staple was a government organisation dating probably from the reign of Edward I, which fixed the town or towns in which the 'staple' products of England, such as wool, hides, and tin, might be sold to foreigners, so as to facilitate collection of customs. When Chaucer was writing the foreign staple was at Middelburgh, and the Merchant would have to transport his goods thither, and desired that the sea should be well guarded that they might go in safety. Until the reign of Edward III, the most important merchants in England were foreigners, but in his reign there were many English merchants of great wealth. Chaucer's would not have ranked with these. He was in debt, we are told, and he seems to have made his profits (see note to l.278) by questionable means.

The Clerk

A CLERK[1] ther was of Oxenford also.
That unto logyk hadde longe y-go[2].
As leene[3] was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake[4],
But looked holwe[5], and ther-to sobrely[6] ;
Ful thredbare was his overeste[7] courtepy[8] ;
For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice[9],
Ne was so worldly for to have office ;
For hym was levere[10] have at his beddes heed
Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophie,
Than robes riche, of fithele[11], or gay sautrie[12] :
But al be[13] that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre[14] ;
But al that he myghte of his freendes hente[15]
On bookes and his lernynge he it spente,
And bisilv gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye[16].
Of studie took he moost cure[17] and moost heede,
Noght o[18] word spak he moore than was neede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short ond quyk[19] ond ful of hy sentence[20].
Sownynge[21] in moral vertu[22] was his speche
And gladly wolde he lerne[23] and gladly teche[24].

---

1. Scholar. 2. Long ago. 3. Lean; thin. 4. Venture to affirm. 5. Hollow. 6. Gravely. 7. Uppermost. 8. Short coat. 9. Ecclesiastical living. 10. It was pleasanter to him. 11. Fiddle. 12. Psaltry. (a sort of harp). 13. Although. 14. Loffer. 15. Obtain. 16. Study. 17. Care. 18. One. 19. Alive, animated. 20. Full of meaning. 21. Full of. 22. Moral excellant. 23. To learn. 24. To teach.

There was an Oxford scho'ar who had studied logic long ago. His horse was thinner than a rake and he him· self was not too fat, I am prepared to accept. He had a sober and hollow look. The overcoat which he wore was almost worn out. He had yet no taken holy orders and he was hardly practical enough for a secular job. He preferred to have books by Aristotle by his bed than nice and luxurious clothes and other such things. Though he was a philosopher as I have told you just now he had not found the philosopher's stone that turns everything into gold. Whatever money he took from his friends, he spent on books and his learning and prayed for his friends who gave him money for his learning and studies. Indeed his only love was study and he never spoke more than what was necessary. His speech was always formal, elegant, respectful, short, lofty and to the point. The thought of moral virtue always coloured his speech and he was always prepared to learn and to teach.

Inter Chapter Ten :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S CLERK.

Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The Prologue Macmillan and Co., London.

The term Clerk was applied to any ecclesiastical student, and though Chaucer's Clerk had long applied himself to Logic, the principal subject in the Arts course at all mediæval universities, we may think of him as a young man, since twelve or thirteen was the usual age for boys to go to the university. He was still in need of his friends' help to pursue his studies (1.299), perhaps with a view to take up the long course in Theology, but had probably taken his bachelor's degree in Arts at Oxford, and perhaps been abroad, according to the peripatetic habits of the day, to learn from foreign teachers. If we were to take the Prologue to his Tale of Grisilde literally we should have to say that he had been at Padua, where there was a famous university with many foreign students, since he tells us that he had there met Petrarch. But this was more probably a piece of Chaucer's own experience, and some writers have found on it a theory that in the character of the Clerk he is really describing himself. For this there is very little to be said, for Chaucer, though he could appreciate the Clerk's unworldliness, was certainly not a man of the same stamp, and would probably have preferred many books to those 'of Aristotle and his philosophie,' not to mention that he was not an ecclesiastic but a very busy servant of the Crown, the very thing he praises his Clerk for not being. The Ellesmere picture of the Clerk is one of the least successful. Justice is done to the leanness of the horse, but that is all. We may be sure that the Clerk would not have carried his precious books about with him in this promiscuous fashion, and the violet garment he is wearing can hardly be a 'Courtepy.'

The Sergeant of Law

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWE, war[1] and wys,
That often hadde been at the Parvys[2],
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet[3] he was, and of greet reverence ;
He semed swich[4], his wordes weren so wise.
Justice he was ful often in assise[5],
By patente[6] and by pleyn commissioun :
For his science[7] and for his heigh renoun[8]
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon ;
So greet a purchasour[9] was nowher noon[10].
Al was fee symple to hym in effect[11],
His purchasyng myghte nat been infect[12].
Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas[13],
And yet he seemed bisier than he was.
In termes[14] hadde he caas and doomes[15] alle
That from the tyme of kyng William were falle ;
Ther-to he coude endite[16] and make a thyng,
Ther koude no wight pynche[17] at his writyng ;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote[18].
He rood but hoomly in a medlee[19] cote,
Girt with a ceint[20] of silk, with barres smale[21] ;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

1. Wary; prudent. 2. Church porch. 3. Profoundly wise. 4. Such. 5. Session, justice of assize. 6. King's order; King's letters patent. 7. Knowledge. 8. Renown; fame. 9. Buyer of land. 10. None. 11. In fact. 12. Invalid. 13. There was not. 14. Precise wording. 15 Judgments. 16. Draw up in legal form. 17. Find fault with. 18. By heart. 19. Striped. 20. Belt. 21. Small metal pieces.

There also was, of noted excellence, a Sergeant at Law, wary and wise who had quite often been to St. Paul's porch.

He was a man of noted excellence and he was held in great reverence. He was such a worthy man that he had quite often been appointed Justice of assize by the king's letters patent. His fame and learning had won him many a robe and many a fee. No one was as great a buyer of land as he was. "He would have no entail on the property he bought so that his purchase could not be invalid." He was the busiest man in all the neighbourhood but he seemed to be busier than he was. He could deal with all legal matters very precisely and exactly recorded since William. He knew very well how to make a case up and a faultless, flawless draft. He knew (and remembered) every rule and statute by heart. He rode in a plain manner and wore a striped coat with a belt of silk that was set with small metal pieces, I need not speak any further of his dress.

Inter Chapter Eleven :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S SERGEANT AT LAW

I. Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

Sergeants-at-law were the king's servants (servientes) in legal matters, chosen from among barristers of sixteen years' standing, and on their appointment had to give a feast of almost royal magnificance, at which the king himself was sometimes present. From among them were chosen the judges of the Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas. The sergeants who were not judges could continue to plead in court, and win fees and robes from suitors. By means of the wealth they gained, fairly or unfairly, the great lawyers in Chaucer's time were enabled to acquire much landed property, and this 'purchasing' (1.320) was commonly brought as an accusation against them by the satirists of the day.

II. The SERGEANT of the Law spans twenty-two lines and sixteen condicioun entries, so the character has not been at all scamped. Again, the occupational proficiency ; he has no equal. He is the admirable legist, unrivalled in his command of law, with no accusation of petrifoggery. But character and idealized profession do not tally as exactly as they do with the Knight, because there is here the smack of professionalism, of guile, stabbing through the verb "semed" and devastating couplet (II. 321 22). The Man of Law does not represent his office, as does the Knight. He uses his office, or the skills of his office, and this gives another dimension to his nature. Yet, he too is not individualized at all, though there is a hint of personality beyond the enclosure of class.

—Ralph Baldwin.

The Franklin

A Frankeleyn was in his compaignye.
Whit was his berd as is a dayesye[1].
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn[2];
Wel loved he by the morwe a sope in wyn[3].
To lyven in delit was ever his wone[4],
For he was Epicurus[5] owene sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn[6] delit,
Was verraily felicitee parfit.
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he:
Seint Julian[7] was he in his contree;
His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon[8];
A bettre envyned[9] man was nowher[10] noon[11].
Withoute bake[12] mete was never his hous,
Of fissh and flessh, and that so plenteuous,
It snewed[13] in his hous of mete and drynke,
Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper[14].
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe[15],
And many a breem[16] and many a luce[17] in stuwe[18].
Wo[19] was his cook but if[20] his sauce were
Poynaunt[21] and sharpe, and redy al his geere[22].
His table dormant[23] in his halle alway,
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
Ful oft tyme he was knyght of the shire.
An anlaas[24], and a gipser[25] al of siik,
Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk[26].
A shirreve[27] hadde he been, and a countour[28];
Was nowher such a worthy vavasour[29]

---

1. Daisy. 2. Ruddy. 3. Cake. dipped in wine. 4. Habit. 5. A Greek hedonist who believed pleasures. 6. Absolute; sheer.

A Franklin was in his company. His beard was daisy —white and his complexion was ruddy. In the morning he loved to have a soap of cake dipped in wine. He lived for pleasure and he was a real, true son of Epicurus according to whom sensuous delight and pleasure was the only pleasure that one could have. He made his household free to all the country.

His bread and ale were the finest of the fine and nobody else had a better stock of wine. His house was never short of bake meat pies, fish and flesh and his house was always overflooded with all these things and with all the delicacies that a man could think of. He ordered a change of dishes according to the changes in the season. He had many partridges and breams and luces. It would have meant hell for his cook if the sauce prepared by him was not sharp and pungent, and if all his utensils were not in readiness. The table in his dining hall was all the time covered and ready to serve out meals. He held lordly position at Sessions and represented the Shire at the Parliament. A dagger and a little silken purse hung at his girdle which was white as morning milk. He had been a sheriff and an accountant and was a model amongst the landed gentry.

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7. St. Julian is the patron saint of hospitality. 8. Always according to standard. 9. Stored in wine. 10. No where. 11. Known. 12. 12. Baked. 13. Abounded. 14. Supper. 15. Mew. 16. Fresh water fish. 17. Pike. 18. Fish pond. 19. Woe. 20. Unless. 21. Pungent. 22. Utensils. 23. Fixed. 24. Dagger. 25. Purse; bag. 26. Fresh milk. 27. Sheriff. 28. Accountant. 29. A country squire.

Inter Chapter Twelve :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S FRANKLIN

Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales : The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

A Franklin was a free tenant of the Crown, holding his lands without the obligation of military service or rent. The wealth and importance of this one are shown not only by his keeping open house for all the country side (1.340), and the mews and fish-ponds attached to his estate which enabled him to do so, but also by his having acted as chairman of the sessions, representative of the shire in Parliament (II. 355 sq.), sheriff of his country and an accountant or auditor of the local expenditure. The Ellesmere picture does full justice to the whiteness of his beard and shows him in a red surcoat lined with blue, with stripes of fringe across it. At his waist hangs a bottle, probably suggested by 1.334.

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The Gildsmen

AN HABERDASSHERE[1], and a CARPENTER,
A WEBBE[2] a DYERE and a TAPYCER[3]—,
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree[4]
Of a solempne and greet fraternitee[5] ;
Ful fressh and newe hir[6] geere[7] apiked[8] was ;
Hir knyves were chaped[9] noght with bras,
But al with silver, wroght ful clene and weel,
Hire girdles and hir pouches everydeel[10].
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys[11]
To sitten in a yeldehalle[12], on a deys[13].
Everich for the wisdom that he kan[14]
Was shaply[15] for to been an alderman[16],
For catel[17] hadde they ynogh and rente[18].
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente[19],
And elles[20] certeyn were they to blame ;
It is ful fair[21] to been y-cleped[22] *Madame*,
And goon to vigilies[23] al bifore,
And have a mantel roialliche[24] y-bore[25].

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1. Maker of hats etc. dealer in small wares. 2. Weaver. 3. Upholsterer. 4. Livery. 5. Guild; brotherhood. 6. Their. 7. Apparel. 8. Fashioned. 9. Mounted. 10. Every whit. 11. Burgess; (citizen). 12. Guild-hall. 13. Dais. 14. Knows. 15. Fit. 16. Warden. 17. Property. 18. Income. 19. Agree. 20. Else. 21. Fine. 22. Called. 23. Meetings on the eve of a festival. 24. Royalty. 25. Borne.

There were also a haberdasher, a carpenter, a weaver, a dyer and an upholesterer all in one group. They were smartly dressed and their apparel was fashioned fresh. Their knives were wrought with silver and not with brass and their girdles and pouches were excellently wrought every inch.

Each of them seemed to be a worthy citizen fit to grace a guild-hall with a seat upon the dais. Their wiscom certainly would have justified the plan to make each one of them an alderman. They had plenty of money and income and their wives would also agree to that. If they did not think it so, they ought to. To be called madam is a glorious thought and to go to the church having your dress borne like that of a queen.

Inter Chapter Thirteenth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S FIVE GILDSMEN

Professor Alfred W. Pollard. Canterbury Tales : The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

The Fraternities or Gilds of the fourteenth century were of two kinds, those whose objects were purely religious and social, and those of which each was restricted to members of a particular craft or trade, for which they made regulations. These five pilgrims apparently also belonged to their craft-gilds, but as they were of five different occupations, the fraternity of which they all wore the livery was obviously only social and religious. [In Chaucer's time such gilds abounded all over England] and we may learn their character from the closely similar rules of the two gilds of S. Katherine and SS. Fabian and Sebastain, both connected with the Church of S. Botulph, Aldersgate, as reported to Richard II. in 1389, adding a few particulars from others in the country. Brothers and sisters were received into the gild, and paid yearly fees, on the annual day of meeting, when they heard mass and chose their officers ; one disabled or in poverty might have a weekly allowance of 14d. (equal to as many shillings in present value) or be helped to get work ; a loan could be borrowed, on security, from the gild funds. Funerals of the dead brethren were to be attended by all the members and prayers to be said for their souls, the cost for poor brethren being paid by the gild. Wax lights were to be provided for certain festivals in church. Many gilds undertook the maintenance of the fabric of churches ; some supported schools, others repaired bridges or roads. All required good behaviour at feasts and meetings, with obedience to their officers, and

these were in many cases required to exercise arbitration between members in dispute. Thus a great part of the social life of the Middle classes between the reigns of Edward III. and Edward VI. centred round the gilds. Yet on the ground that their paying for masses for the souls of dead members made them superstitious institutions, the property of the social and religious class was confiscated by R. Edward VI., c. 14. a mere fragment of it being devoted to founding grammar schools, while most of the rest was granted to court favourites. A blow was thus struck at English social life from which it has never recovered. (See English Gilds. The ordinances of more than one hundred early English gilds, edited by Toulmin Smith. 1870)].

(2) The Five GUILDSMEN are "disc" characters, presented in aggregate. There could, of course, be none which was shared by all. An individualizing here would frustrate its own intent, except, of course, in the way Chaucer really handles it. This time, too, the line to the characters is tangential. There array is described in some detail, but that is the only immediate rendering in the passage. For them is the likelihood ("semed", "shaply") of being a burgess or an alderman ; this is the prosperous air of travellers. Condicioun is largely posed in terms of putative function (that function instrumental on a social scale) by social values regarded in the light of social prestige. For the rest. they are pictured through the bourgeois complacencies of their wives ; again, the presentation of condicioun mediated in terms of degree. Here is a group sunk into class, and they are given a brief and thin life through the pejorative limitations of that class.

—Ralph Baldwin.

The Cook

A COOK they hadde with hem for the nones[1],
To boille the chiknes with the marybones[2],
And poudre-marchant[3] tart and galyngale[4].
Wel koude the knowe a draughte[5] of London ale ;
He koude rooste and sethe[6] and boille and frye,
Maken mortreux[7] and wel bake a pye[8].
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me[9],
That on his shyne[10] a mormal[11] hadde he.
For blankmanger[12], that made he with the beste.

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1. For the occasion. 2. Marrow-bones. 3. Pungent spice. 4. Root of sweet cyprus. 5. Drink. 6. Seethe. 7. Dish. 8. Pastry 9. Seemed to me. 10. Shin. 11. Sore. 12. Minced capon with cream, sugar and flour.

They had a cook with them who stood all alone for boiling chickens with a marrow bone, sharp-flavouring powder and a spice for savour. He could distinguish London ale by flavour. He could roast and fry, make excellent thick soup and bake a tasty pie. But unfortunately (I pitied him for that) he had an ulcer on his knee. As far as blankmanger, he made it very best.

Inter Chapter Fourteenth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S COOK

Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

If not so great a knave as the Pardoner or Summoner, the Cook is among the most disreputable of Chaucer's pilgrims. Though he could make blank—mangers and mortreux, we are not to think of him as a *chef*, able to superintend one of the portentous medieval banquets, but as the proprietor of an eating—house, wont to stand outside his shop crying "Hote pies, hote, Good gees and grys (pigs), Go we dyne, go we !" like the cooks and their knaves in Langland's *Vision* (Prologue, 1.104 sq), or the sellers of 'Hot shepes feete' in Candlewick Street, of whom we read in the London Lykpenny. When, in his unseemly delight at the Miller's tale, he offers to tell a story himself, the Host says to him :

> "*Now telle on Roger, looke that it be good ;*
> *For many a pastee hastow laten blood,*
> *And many a Fakke of Dovere hastow sold,*
> *That hath been twies hot and twies cold :*
> *Of many a pilgrim hastow Cristes curs,*
> *For of thy percely yet they fare the wors,*
> *That they hav eten with thy stubbel goos.*
> *For in thy shop is many a flye loos.*"

The tale he begins to tell is of a rascally apprentice, and we lose little by its being left a mere fragment. As the pilgrims near Canterbury he becomes so drunk that he falls from his horse,

And er that he agayn were in his sadel
Ther was greet shovying, bothe to and fro,
To lifte hym up, and muchel care and wo,
So unweeldy was this sory, pallied goost.

In the Ellesmere picture he is represented holding a three-pronged flesh-hook in one hand and his hat in the other, as if appealing to the company for a hearing.

The Shipman

A Shipman was ther, wonynge[1] fer by weste;
For aught I woot he was Dertemouthe.
He rood upon a rouncy[2] as he kouthe[3],
In a gowne of faldyng[4] to the knee.
A daggere hangynge on a laas[5] hadde he
Aboute his nekke[6] under his arm adoun.
The hoote somer hadde maad his hewe[7] al broun[8];
And certeinly he was a good felawe.
Ful many a draughte of wyn hadde he y-drawe
Fro Burdeux-ward, whil that the chapman[9] sleepe[10].
Of nyce[11] conscience took he no keepe[12].
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond[13],
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
But of his craft[14] to rekene[15] wel his tydes[16],
His stremes[17] and his daungers hym bisides,
His herberwe[18] and his moone[19], his lode-menage[20],
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake:
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
He knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,
From Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere,
And every cryke[21] in Britaigne and in Spayne.
His barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.

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1. Dwelling. 2. Hack. 3. Could. 4. Coarse stuff. 5. Lace; string. 6. Neck. 7. Colour. 8. Brown. 9. Merchant. 10. Slept. 11. Scrupulous. 12. Care. 13. Became victorious. 14. Skill. 15. Calculate. 16. Tides. 17. Currents. 18. Harbour. 19. Position of the moon, as a guide to navigation. 20. Pilotage. 21. Creek; harbour.

There was a Shipman also hailing from far west. I think he came from Dartmouth. He rode a farmer's horse as best as he could. He wore a woollen gown that reached his knee. He had a dagger hanging on a string about his neck. The summer heat had turned his colour brown and he was certainly an excellent fellow. He had drawn at Bordeaux wine in plenty from the cask while the merchant slept. He ignored the nicer rules of conscience. If he came out successfully in a fight he drowned all the prisoners. As for calculations concerning navigation, there was none to beat him from Hull to Carthage. He was very prudent in undertaking an expedition. His beard had been shaken by many tempests. He knew all the havens, as they were from Gottland to the Cape of Finisterre and every creek in Brittany and Spain. The barge he owned was called The Maudelayne.

Inter Chapter Fifteenth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S SHIPMAN

Professor Alfred. W. Pollard, Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales : The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

Chaucer's Shipman was the master of his barge, 'the Maudelayne,' since it was he who was responsible for its steering and for the fate of its assailants. A vessel named the 'Magdaleyne' of Dartmouth, Peter Risshenden, master, paid custom duties in 1386, but as Chaucer only says that his Shipman may have come from Dartmouth, we must not rush to the conclusion that it was Peter Risshenden who tossed his prisoners overboard, and stole the wine he was carrying. An excellent paper on the Shipman was contributed to part V. of the Chaucer Society's Essays by Dr. P. Q. Karkeek.

The Doctor

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF PHISIK[1];
In all this world ne was ther noon hym lik,
To speke of phisik and of surgerye ;
For he was grounded[2] in astronomye.
He kepte[3] his pacient a ful greet deel
In houres[4], by his magyk, natureel.
Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent[5]
Of his ymages[6] for his pacient
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot, or cold, or moyste, or drye,
And where they engendred and of what humour ;
He was verray parfit praktisour[7].
The cause y-knowe and of his harm the roote,
Anon he yaf the sike man his boote[8].
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries[9]
To sende him drogges[10] and his letuaries[11],
For ech of hem made oother for to wynne[12] ;
Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne.
Wel knew he the olde Esculapius
And Deyscorides, and eek Rufus,
Olde Ypocras, Haly and Galyen,
Serapion, Razis and Avycen,
Averrois, Damascien and Constantyn,
Bernard and Gatesden and Gilbertyn.
Of his diete mesurable[13] was he,
For it was of no superfluitee[14],
But of greet norissyng[15] and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwyn[16] and in pers[17] he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata[18] and with sendal[19].
And yet he was but esy[20] of dispence[21] ;
He kepte that[22] he wan in pestilence[23].
For gold in phisik is a cordial[24] ;
Therfore he lovede gold in special[25].

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1. Medicine. 2. Instructed. 3. Observed. 4. Astromical hours. 5. Interpret the ascendant as fortunate. 6. Images used as a charm for the cure of the patient. 7. Practitioner. 8. Remedy. 9.

A Doctor too emerged as we proceeded. No one alive could talk as admirably as he did on points of surgery and medicine for being grounded in astronomy he watched his patient's favourable star and by his Natural Magic knew what are the lucky hours and planetary degrees for making charms and magic effiges. He knew the cause of every disease and he knew the humour and condition of every disease. He was a perfect practising physician. These causes being known to him, he gave the medicine to the man then and there. He always had people who prepared drugs ready.

They helped each other in making money. They had been friends for quite some time. He was well versed in Esculapius, Hippocrates, Rufus, Dioscorides, Galen, Rhazes, Haly, Serapion, Averroes, Avicenna. Constantyn, Scotch Bernard, John of Gaddesden and Gilbertyn, He was moderate enough in his diet which included no superfluities for pleasure but only nutritive and digestive food. He did not read the Bible very much. He rode his way clad in a stuff of blo d red colour lined with blue taffeta. He was moderate in expenditure. He saved the money made in epidemics for gold is invigorating for the heart. He therefore had a special love of gold.

Persons who prepared drugs. 10. Drugs. 11. Remedies. 12. To gain profit. 13. Moderate. 14. Excess. 15. Nutritions. 16. Stuff of a blood-red colour. 17. Dark-blue. 18. Sort of silk. 19. Thin silk. 20. Moderate. 21. Expenditure. 22. What. 23. Epidemic. 24. Medicine invigorating the heart. 25. Especially.

Inter Chapter Sixteenth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S DOCTOR OF PHYSIC

Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales : The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

Chaucer's character of his Doctor of Physic introduces us to a world of thought so different from our own that it would need many pages to offer and adequate commentary on it. In his day every part of the human body was supposed to be under the domination of one of the twelve Signs or Constellations (see Chaucer's *Astrology*), Aries governing the head, Taurus the neck etc. Knowledge of these relations was thought so essential that a picture illustrating them was placed in all the early p inted Books of Hours or prayer books for lay use, and a physician was supposed to choose the part of the body at which to bleed a patient according to the sign then in the ascendant Complications were introduced by the sign under which the patient was born, which was thought to rule his destiny through life ; by the sign in the ascendant when his illness began, etc, etc. The skill of the astrologer-physician would be exercised in calculating the hours when the balance of contending influences would be most favourable to his patient, and choosing these for the application of his remedies. These remedies were directed, in the case of disease, to restoring the balance of the four qualities of hot, cold, dry, and moist. (As to these the popular 15th-16th century compendium. *The Kalender of Shepherdes*, remarks "the whiche whan they be well tempred and egall, that one surmount not the other, than the body of a man is hole. But whan they ben unegall and myssetempred, that one domyne over another, than a man is seke or dysposed to

sekeness; and they ben the qualytes that the bodyes holdeth of the elementes that they ben made and composed of, that is to wete of the fyre heet, of the water colde, of the ayre moyste, and of the erth drye." (Pynson's edition, 1506, ed. Sommer, 1892, P. 107). Chaucer's physician to attain the degree of Doctor of physic must have mastered all this lore, besides what was known of anatomy and other medical studies, properly so called. He must have been a rich man to take the degree of Doctor, which involved great expenses in fees, presents, and feasting. But he was himself thrifty and abstemious, with a touch of miserliness, and the tendency to despise theological studies, which was suppo-ed, down to the days of Sir Thomas Browne who wrote his *Religio Medici* as a protest, to characterize his profession. In the Ellesmere manuscript the Doctor is shown in a purple surcoat and stockings, with a blue hood trimmed with white fur. He carries with him the large flask, which was taken as the pictorial emblem of his profession, and is scrutinizing its contents.

(2) The DOCTOR's is a pat, a personal portrait, the synoptic physician of folklore and early medical history. Collusion with the apothecaries, religious indifference, astrological and humoral therapy these are the trade mark of the doctor. The portrait becomes more pointed only as the attributes of miserliness impinge upon the professional data. Generic traits, carried to the limit through the practioner, make for the one fairly indiscernible among the many.

The Knight and the Guildsmen therefore concur with their rank and status, equating rather closely with the respective ideals of their classes. The Man of Law and the Doctor are likewise professional profiles, but with an incipient individuality.

— Ralph Baldwin.

The Wife Of Bath

A GOOD WIF was ther of biside BATHE,
But she was som-del deef[1], and that was scathe[2].
Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt[3]
She passed[4] hem[5] of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wif[6] ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge[7] bifore hire sholde goon ;
And if ther dide, certeyn[8] so wrooth[9] was she,
That she was out of alle charitee[10].
Hir coverchiefs[11] ful fyne weren of ground[12],—
I dorste swere they weyeden[13] ten pound,—
That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed.
Hir hosen[14] weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite[15] y-teyd[16], and shoes ful moyste[17] and newe.
Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed[18] of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve[19] ;
Housbondes[20] at chirche dore she hadde fyve,
Withouten[21] oother compaignye[22] in youthe,—
But ther-of nedeth nat to speke as nowthe[23],—
And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem ;
She hadde passed many a straunge strem[24] ;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne.
She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye[25].
Gat-tothed[26] was she, soothly for to seye[27].
Upon an amblere[28] esily she sat,
Y-wympled[29] wel, and on hir heed and hat
As brood as is a bokeler[30] or a targe[31] :
A foot mantel[32] aboute hir hipes large,
And on hire feet a paire of spores[33] sharpe.
In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe[34] ;
Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,
For she koude of that art the olde daunce[35].

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1. Some what deaf. 2. That was a pity. 3. Habit. 4. Surpassed. 5. Them. 6. Woman. 7. Offering; alons of the faithful. 8. Certainly. 9. Angry. IS. Christian love. 11. Kerchiefs. 12. Foundation for embroidery. 13. Weighed. 14. Hoses. 15. Tight.

A worthy woman from the city of Bath was also with us. She was unfortunately somewhat deaf. She was excellent at making cloth and there she surpassed those of Ypres and Gaunt. No one else could have the cheek to proceed her in making an offering at the altar and if some body would do that she would soon be angry forgetting everything about love and charity. Her kerchiefs were of a finely woven texture and they were nicely embroidered. I might swear that the kerchief which she wore on Sunday were worth some good ten pounds.

Her hose were of the finest scarlet red and her garters were tight. Her shoes were soft and new. Her face was bold, handsome and red in hue. She was a worthy woman all her life. And what is more she had five husbands on the authority of religion apart from her numerous other companions of youth. But at the present moment there is no need to mention that. she had seen many rivers and passed over them and she had been to Jerusalem thrice. She had been to Rome, Bologne, St. James and Cologne. She was quite adventurous by nature. To speak the truth, she had widely apart set teeth. She sat easily upon an ambler and was provided with a wimple and on her head she wore a hat as wide as a shield. She had a flowing petticoat which concealed her large hips and on her feet a pair of sharp spurs. She was a good conversationalist and could talk well and laugh in a company. She possibly knew something of love charms for she was considerably experienced in the art of love.

16. Tied. 17. Soft. 18. Red. 19. Life. 20. Husbands 21. In addition to. 22. Companions. 23. At present. 24. River. 25. Along the road. 26. With teeth apart. 27. To speak candidly. 28. Horse moving at an easy pace. 29. Provided with a wimple. 30. A small round shield. 31. Shield. 32. Riding petticoat. 33. Spars. 34. Talk. 35. The old game (the old way of making love).

Inter Chapter Seventeenth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S WIFE OF BATH

Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, The Prologue, Macmillan and Co , London.

Chaucer has supplemented this character-sketch of the Wife of Bath by making her give, as a prologue to her tale, an only too vivid history of very varied married life. From this we learn that she was marr ed for the first time at twelve, and for the fifth at forty. Age, she tells us, had now bereft her of her beauty, but in a phrase which even in the mouth of so coarse a woman retains some pathos, she says also,

> "Unto his day it doth myne herte boote
> That I have had my world as in my tyme."

Her first three husbands were all rich old men, who left her their lands. As Bath was a centre of the cloth trade we must imagine that one of them had been a cloth maker (this according to the trade custom of the time would give anyone who married his widow a right to succeed to his place in the clothmaker's gild) and so account for the Wife's own skill in the craft. The gild system did not encourage the employment of women in manufactures, but in the kindred craft of the Fullers a workan was allowed to work "with the master's wife or her maid who sits at her table". *Regulation of the Lincoln Fuller 1337*) though with no other woman. Next to her matrimonial experiences, the most noteworthy thing which Chaucer tells us about her is the extent of her pilgrimages, on the longest of which she seems to have gone alone, since she says of her fourth husband "He deyde whan I cam fro Jerusalem," which implies that he had not gone with her. But such long journeys seem to have been more rather than less common in Chaucer's time than now, as is suggested by special provision being made for them in the ordinances of some of the gilds. Thus in the rules of the Tailors of Lincoln we read : "if anyone (i e. any member of the gild) wishes to

make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Jerusalem, each brother and sister shall give him a penny; and if to St James's or Rome, a halfpenny; and they shall go with him outsides the gates of the city of Lincoln; and on his return they shall meet him and go with him to his mother church." In the same way a brother or sister of the gild of the B. V. Mary at Hull, who wished to go to the Holy Land, was released from the yearly payment "in order that all the gild may share in his pilgrimage." In the Ellesmere manuscript the Wife is depicted, quite appropriately, as riding astride her horse, the custom of women riding sidesaddle having only been introduced into England by Anne of Bohemia, Richard II.'s first wife, and not yet having become general, though the fashionable Prioress is made to adopt it. The artist has done justice to the size of the Wife's hat and kerchiefs. Her gown is red, her trouser like foot-mantel blue. The scarlet hosen are not visible.

THE WIFE OF BATH

Professor Walter C. Curry, in an interesting series of articles on Chaucer's use of the science of his time, particularly physiology, medicine, and astrology, in building up the portraits of his characters, in motivating their actions, and in explaining certain events in the Tales, has devoted two papers to the Wife of Bath. His view seems to be that Chaucer's characters are not portraits drawn from life but artificial constructions from scientific data Chaucer's point of departure for a portrait, if I understand Professor Curry would be the scientific summary of the physical and psychological characteristics of a temperament or the features of physique, character, and incident determined by an astrological horoscope. That Chaucer was thoroughly acquainted with these branches of mediaeval science, that he made much use of their terms in setting forth the qualities, physical, mental, and moral of his dramatic personae has long been known and has been well emphasized and richly illustrated by the recent contributions of Professor Curry, but the evidence seems to me to be strongly against the view that the persons of Chaucer's pilgrimage are artificial constructions assembled from the abstract conceptions of mediaeval science.

With regard to the Wife of Bath I shall not undertake a critical examination of Professor Curry's views. But certain facts which seem to point to her real existence and to a personal knowledge of her by the poet deserve at least passing consideration. How vivid and individual a figure she is, I need not remind you, but I should like to refresh your recollection by recalling some of the details

That she is depicted as possessing a number of traits common to all women of her class and general type is true; if it were otherwise, she would not be representative. She is a weaver and comes from that part of England in which weaving had been a flourishing in ustry for at least a hundred and fifty years. Morever, a notable feature of the weaving industry was the prominent part taken in it by women. One of the latest and best histories of the trade, that of Lipson, says :—

The employment of women workers has always been a marked feature of the woollen industry. They served as wool-sorters and wool-wrappers, carders and spinners, dyers and weavers. One fourth of the cloth woven in York at the end of the fourteenth century was the work of women, and they were enrolled as apprentices and admitted to the membership of the crafts. A large portion of the cloth made at Wakefield in 1396 was manufactured in "Emma Earle's weaving sheds"......The wool packers of Southampton......seem to have been entirely women, and they afford a unique example of a women's industrial gild. They were organized as a company of women artisans and were governed by two wardens elected by the women from their own ranks.

Perhaps it was to a gild of this sort that Chaucer refers when he represents the Wife as so angrily insistent upon her rights of precedence at "the offrynge." There were, however, also in Somerset gilds organized on the basis of sex and age as well as those on a mere trade basis. For instance, at Croscombe, near Bath, there were in the fifteenth century, and probably earlier, sep rate gilds of youths, maidens, and wives. At services the gild of wives must have offered as a body, for we read of "the Wives'

taper" and of sums given by "the Wives." It may be that, as Chaucer's words suggest, they went forward in a body, and his Wife always insisted upon leading the way.

Chaucer's words about the Wife's skill seem complimentary and sincere:

> Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt
> She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.

but Chaucer indulges in irony to a degree not always recognised. Alton and Holland, in The King's Customs, are confident that this encomium is ironical. They point out that it was enacted in Richard II's reign "that all West-Country should be exposed for sale open, as merchants who had bought it by the bale and had taken it abroad had been in danger of their lives from the incensement of buyers who had found the b les deceptive." Can it be that this had anything to do with the active controversy between the Merchant and the Wife on the pilgrimage ?.

But not necesarily typical of Somerset weavers are certain other traits which Chaucer ascribes to the Wife of Bath. She was an addict to pilgrimages, She had visited the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem no less than three times, and as a year was the time necessary for this trip, no one but a lover of travel would have undertaken it She had seen the Vernicle and other relics at Rome; she had worshipped at the shrine of St. James at Compostella and at that of the Three Kings in Cologne cathedral. She had also made the shorter pilgrimag- to Boulogne, where the wonder-working Virgin, worshipped especially, by sailors, is still loaded with votive offerings. This shrine, if none of the others, Chaucer himself is likely to have seen, as in 1360 King John of France, prisoner in England since the battle of Crecy, made a pilgrimage to it, accompanied by the sons of Edward III; and Chaucer was then in the service of one of them, Lionel Duke of Clarence. Whether he had ever before visited the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury does not appear.

Every detail of the Wife's character shows that she went on pilgrimages primarily not for religion but for their social advantages. She was not a young woman; her riding

equipment was hardly fashionable, and she still wore the coverchief, or kerchief, which had not been "in style" since the middle of the century. But she was a woman of means and, as she not unreasonably felt, of substantial attractions. She had five husbands and in her youth many lovers, and had grown wise in the affairs of love.

Although Chaucer borrowed from the Roman De la Rose some traits of her description, she is by no means "La Vielle" of that celebrated poem. There are many touches which indicate that Chaucer had a particular person in mind. Not only is her name given—Alysoun—and her striking costume described in much detail, her personality includes two characteristics by no means borrowed or typical; she is deaf and "gat-tothed." Moreover, Chaucer writes as if he had seen her in her native place.

She was not from Bath, as the poet expressly says, "of beside Bathe." This seems vague but is in reality extraordinarily definite. Only by a visit to Bath would Chaucer have been likely to represent her as living beside rather than in the town In his time the little Roman city was still confined almost entirely within its ancient walls and lay in a loop of the river Avon which surrounded it on the east and south and about half the west side. But outside the north gate, there had grown up the parish of St. Michael-without the-walls or St. Michael-without-the-North-Gate also sometimes designated as juxta Bathon. This parish consisted of two streets forming an angle with the apex at the gate of the city, and facing this stood the ancient square-towered Church of St. Michael, with its large enclosed churchyard. All this appears plainly in a sixteenth century picture-map of Bath, which shows even the church door where the Wife married her five husbands.

In 1391, Geoffrey Chaucer, apparently the poet, was appointed one of the two deputy foresters of the royal forest of Petherton, about three miles south of Bridgewater. While, owing to the loss of the records, there is no direct evidence that he performed his duties in person and lived, at least a part of the year, in the part house at Newton Plecy, there is every probability that, at any rate later when he was sole deputy, he at least visited his charge. If so, he would have ridden past the little village of Walcot, strung along the road about half a mile from Bath, and then have ridden along Walcot street past St. Michael's Church to the north gate, for this was the main London road. From the charters and other records of the time we know that most of the cottages in St. Michael's parish were of one storey, made of the mixture of clay and straw called wattle and whitewashad with lime, with thatched roofs, and instead of chimneys "smoke holis" in the middle of the roof. There were, however, some two storey houses, with tiled roofs, and one with a cupola, and posts supporting the second storey. In Walcot street and against the gate were shops and stalls, but there were also gardens separated by walls or hedges of hawthorn.

Although we cannot know the name of the original of Chaucer's Alysour, the Bath records tell us something about the "gossips" with whom she walked about the town and in the fields. Among them were Emma Salp, and Agnes her daughter, who lived north of the church; Edith atte Jete, who had a stall just outside the north gate; Alice de Wyke, who for reasons unknown paid William Burrell's rent for him; and Edith Hooper, Angnes Chete and Angnes Corbet, all of whom had houses in their own names. It is

perhaps also worth recording that in the volume of Ancient Deeds published in 1921 by the Bath Records Society, Alice (or Alysoun seems the commonest name among the women who figure in these documents, and curiously enough more than one of these Alices rejoiced in three or more husbands, though I can find none who had clearly achieved five.

Apparently most of those named in the records were women of some means and some degree of independence. Whether, like the Wife, they were weavers does not appear from the Ancient Deeds, but no dout many of them, were. If they were members of a gild with a rule like that of Southampton, commanding the members "not to bawle nor scold oon with anither," we may suspect that over a question of precedence more than one of them would have been as negligent in observing it as would the Wife of Bath herself.

—Manly.

The parson

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a POURE PERSOUN OF A TOUN ;
But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk ;
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes Gospel trewely wolde preche :
His parisshens[1] devoutly wolde he teche.
Benygne he was, and wonder[2] diligent,
And in adversitee[3] ful pacient ;
And swich he was y-preved[4] ofte sithes[5].
Ful looth were hym[6] to cursen for his tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his poure parisshens aboute,
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce[7] :
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce[8].
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses[9] fer asonder[10],
But he ne lafte[11] nat for reyn[12] ne thonder,
In siknesse, nor in meschief[13], to visite
The ferreste[14] in his parisshe, muche and lite[15],
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample[16] to his sheepe he yaf,
That firste he wroghte and afterward he taughte.
Out of the gospel he tho[17] wordes caughte,
And this figure[18] he added eek therto,
That if gold ruste what shal iren doo ?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed[19] man to ruste ;
And shame it is, if a prest take keepe[20],
A shiten[21] shepherde and a clene sheepe.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive
By his clennesse how that his sheepe sholde lyve.

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1. Parishoners. 2. Unusually. 3. Adversity. 4. Proved. 5. Times. 6. It would be repugnant to him. 7. Property 8. Sufficient. 9. Monastic houses. 10. Apart. 11. Neglected. 12. Rain. 13. Misfortune. 14. Most distant. 15. Great and small. 16. Example. 17. Those. 18. Simile (figure of speech). 19. Ignorant person. 20. Observe. 21. Defiled.

There was a good man of religion also with us. He was a poor parson of a town. He was quite a scholar and he was rich in holy thought and work. He was an earnest preacher. He was very kind and very laborious.

He was very patient in adversity for he had proved himself so in adversity. He much disliked extorting tithe or fee ; rather he preferred to distribute his alms and all that he possessed. He was satisfied with little things. His parish was quite largely spread over and the houses were situated at quite some distance from each other but he never missed to visit them however bad and unpleasant the weather was. He believed in first doing things and then preaching them. He caught it from the Bible and added with it the simile—"If gold gets rusty what about iron ?" For if a priest (gold) should go off-the-track it is no wonder that the common ignorant man should also go off the track. It is a shame for the priest to expect a clean sheep when the shepherd is corrupt and defiled. A priest should always, he thought, set an example before the people.

He sette nat his benefice to hyre[1]
And leet his sheepe encombred[2] in the myre,
And ran to Londoun, unto Seint Poules,
To seken hym a chaunterie for soules[3],
Or with a bretherhed[4] to been withholde[5] ;
But dwelte at hoom[6] kepte wel his folde[7],
So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie[8],—
He was a shepherde, and noght a mercenarie[9]:
And though he hooly were and vertuous,
He was to synful man nat despitous[10],
Ne of his speche daungerous[11] ne digne[12],
But in his techyng discreet and benygne[13].
To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse[14],
By good ensample, this was his bisynesse[15] :
But it were any persone obstinat,
What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,
Hym wolde he snybben[16] sharply for the nonys.
A bettre preest I trowe that nowher noon ys ;
he waited after[17] no pompe ne reverence,
Ne maked him a spiced[18] conscience,
But Cristes loore[19], and his Apostles twelve,
He taughte, but first he folwed it hym selve.

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1. Hire. 2. Stuck fast. 3. Office of chantry priest. 4. Brotherhood, guild. 5. Kept in occlusion. 6. Home. 7. Sheep-fold. 8. Go astray. 9. Hireling. 10. Merciless. 11. Haughty. 12. Scornful. 13. Gracious. 14. Beauty of life. 15. Task; work. 16. Snub. 17. Expected. 18. Scrupulous. 19. Teaching.

He did not set his benefice to hire and leave his sheep stuck in the mud or run to London to earn easy bread by singing mass services for the wealthy dead or find some Brotherhood and get enrolled. He preferred to stay at home and watch over his people so that no wolf may disturb their peace.

He was a true shepherd (a priest) and not a hire-ling. He was holy and virtuous but he was never contemptuous of sinful men. He was never disdainful and never too proud and fine but was always discreet in teaching and always sympathetic. His business was to show a fair behaviour and thus to draw men to Heaven and their Saviour unless a man was very obstinate. And he took such people to task whatever their rank was. He was the best priest. He sought no pomp or glory in his dealings and his feelings were not coloured by scrupulosity. He taught the lore of Christ and his twelve Apostles but he always followed it himself before preaching it-

Inter Chapter Eighteenth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S POOR PARSON

(1) Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales : The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

Professor Skeat remarks that "Chaucer, in his description of the parson, contrasts the piety and industry of the secular clergy with the wickedness and laziness of the religious orders cf monks." This goes a little beyond the record. Chaucer's characters and individuals, and we cannot fairly say that because he drew a good parish priest (a 'parson,' it should be noted, was properly a 'rector'), a good knight, and a good clerk he meant to hold up knights, parish priests, or clerks for our admiration as contrasted with other professions. In the Miller's tale he draws a picture of a clerk who is a worthless fellow enough, and here in describing the Parson he contrasts him (1.507 sqq.) with other members of his own order. A passage in Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's *England in the Age of Wycliffe* illustrates very well the temptations by which 'poor parsons' in Chaucer's time were beset and to which too many of them succumbed. "The inadequate stipends of many parsons caused many of the less faithful to desert their ill paid duties. 'It has come to our ears,' wrote Archbishop Sudbury (Wilkins iii. 120), "that rectors of our diocese scorn to keep due residence in their churches and go to dwell in distant and perhaps unhonest places, without our license, and let their churches out to farm to persons less fitted. Lay persons with their wives and children sometimes dwell in their rectories, frequently, keeping taverns and other foul and unhonest things in them. Although the Primate complained when this was done without his licenese, such licenses to let out the rectory to farm were easily obtained from the Bishops (MS. Calendar of Lambeth Register, Lambeth Library, *passim*). To regard the cure of souls as a source of income only, was then

recognized and even authorised. Many parsons without leaving a vicar in charge, deserted their dull round of duties among an ignorant and half-savage peasantry, to live in the great cities or in the mansions of the nobility. Here it was not hard for them to get employment as chantry priests, to sing private masses; with the money earned for such easier tasks they eked out the pittance received for parish duties which they were neglecting. As Langland wrote (*Prol. B* 83-86):

'Parsones and parisch presets pleyned hem to the bischop,
That here parisshes were pore, sith the pestilence tyme,
To have a lycence and a leve at London to dwelle,
And syngen there for symonye, for silver is swete.'

As the tithes and dues were partially or wholly alienated the parish priest was in great need of a good stipend from the patron of the living. But Bishops and Parliaments combined to keep these stipends down by ordinances and statutes comparable to the Statutes of Labourers. (In 1354 Archbishop Islip limited these fees to seven marks a year as a maximum. Eight years later Parliament (36 Edwar. III. 1. cap. 8) set a limit of six marks. The Black Death had made priests scarce, and like the labourers they took advantage of the scarcity to try to improve their social position How low that position was is illustrated by the chronicler's remark that these limitations of their stipends forced many to steal (*Wals. i.297*). One is glad to find that the Act was no more successful than the Acts for keeping down other wages, since a statute of Henry the Fifth's reign complained that parsons refused to serve for less than ten, eleven, or even twelve marks. At this stage of the question Archbishop Chicheley supported them, declaring that no vicar ought to be allowed less than such a sum)" *England*

in the Age of Wycliffe, by G. M. Trevelyan, pp. 123 sq). While the poor parsons were thus tempted to desert their flocks to gain an easier livelihood we know from Bishops' visitation enquiries, the attacks of satirists, and the complaints of Wyclif, that other parish priests were concerned chiefly to make themselves useful to the patron or agreeable to his lady, and that others again, where their benefices were rich ones, showed themselves as fond of hunting and as extravagant in dress as Chaucer's Monk. We can thus draw no general conclusion as to the merits of the parish clergy of the fourteenth century from this portrait of one priest, beyond the fact that there were some saints to be found among them. The best pendant indeed to Chaucer's picture is the story told by Caxton in the Epilogue to his *Aesop*) of a worldly ecclesiastic who, finding that an old friend of his was rector of a fine church, asked him, a little jealously, how much the living was worth to him a year.

"Forsothe,' sayde the good symple man, 'I wote neuer ; for to make necer accompte therof, how wel I have had hit four or fyue yere.' 'And knowe ye not,' said he, 'what it is worth ? It shold seme a good benefyce.' 'No, forsothe',' sayd he, 'but I wot wel what it shalle be worth to me.' 'Why ' sayd he, 'what shalle hit be worth ?" 'Forsothe,' sayd he, 'if I doo my trewe dylygence in the cure of my parysshens, in prechyng and techynge ; and doo my parte longynge to my cure. I shall haue heuen therfore, and if theyre soules ben lost, or any of them, by my defawte, I shall be punysshed therfore, and hereof am I sure.'

" 'This was a good answere of a good preest and an honest,' comments Caxton. and we may be sure that Chaucer's Parson would have approved it."

It is rather surprising to a modern reader to find the Parson depicted in the Ellesmere MS. as wearing a red gown but in the fourteeth century this seems to have been the usual colour for a parish priest to wear.

(2) The PARSON, in his turn, has the most honorific portrait or all. This is achieved by portracted condicioun, which, through homiletic and Biblical parallels, as well as expanded similies, contrasts the parson most favourably with the mercenary ecclesiastics of the day. The epitome of the "good shephered" his description is weighed with just that parabolic import. The portrait is Janus faced in its irony ; as a throwback to a primitive pastoral zeal, he is a rebuke to the ecclesiastical worldling, especially in the urban parishes The Parson's biographer never traces the vagaries of person, but only the insistent curves of Charismata and Christlikeness that defy identity and define personality in its latterday connotation. He is singular, he is an original, only insofar as he is the splendid antithesis of the mealy-mouthed priest of his time.

—**Baldwin.**

The Ploughman

With hym ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
That hadde y-lad[1] of dong[2] ful many of fother[3],—
A trewe swynkere[4] and a good was he,
Lyvynge in pees[5] and parfit[6] charitee.
God loved he best, with al his hoole[7] herte,
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte[8],
And thanne his neighebore right as hymselve.
He wolde thresshe[9], and therto dyke[10] and delve[11],
For Cristes sake, for every poure wight[12],
Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.
His tithes payede he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre[13] swynk[14] and his catel.
In a tabard[15] he rood upon a mere.

---

1. Carried. 2. Dung. 3. Cartload. 4. Toiler. 5. Peace. 6. Perfect. 7. Whole. 8. Things went well or ill with him. 9. Thrash. 10. Make ditches. 11. Dig. 12. Creature. 13. Own. 14. Toil. 15. Ploughman's smock.

With him there was a ploughman who was his brother. He had carried loads and loads of dung. He was a true and a really laborious man who followed the Christian doctrine of love and lived in absolute peace. He whole-heartedly loved God best whatever his personal circumstances were and he loved neighbours much as himself. He was a very kind man and would dig and thrash for Christ's sake for every poor fellow without charging anythidg if it lay within his powers. And he would pay his tithes in full as promptly as anybody else whenever they were due. He wore a smock and he rode a mare.

Inter Chapter Nineteenth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S PLOUGHMAN

Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales : The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

As Chaucer's Ploughman paid tithes, both of the fruits of his tillage and of his cattle, he must have been his own master, not merely a 'hind', or hired labourer, though not far removed from one. He may have been a small tenant farmer, or the lands he held may have been 'Lammas lands,' i.e the property of the village but held as private property, from August to August, by successive cultivators. The latter supposition would fit very well with his lending a hand to a poor neighbour, as under the Lammas system such mutual help would be needed. As he tells no story there is no picture of him in the Ellesmere manuscript.

The Miller

Ther was also a REVE[1] and a MILLERE,
A SOMNOUR[2] and a PARDONER[3] also,
A MAUNCIPLE[4] and myself,—ther were namo.
The MILLERE was a stout carl[5] for the nones,
Ful byg he was of brawn[6] and eek of bones ;
That proved wel, for over-al[7], ther her cam,
At wrastlynge[8] he wolde have alwey the ram[9].
He was short sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre[10],
Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve[11] of harre[12],
Or breke it at a rennyng[13] with his heed.
His berd, as any sowe or fox, was reed,
And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cope[14] right of his nose the hade
A werte[15], and theron stood a toft[16] of herys[17],
Reed as the brustles of a sowes erys[18] ;
His nosethirles[19] blake were and wyde ;
A swerd and a bokeler[20] bar he by his syde ;
His mouth as wyde was as a greet forneys,
He was a janglere[21] and a goliardeys[22],
And that was moost of synne and harlotries[23].
Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen[24] thries,
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee[25].
A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne[26],
And therwithal he broghte us out of towne.

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1. Farm bailiff. 2 Officer in an ecclesiastical court. 3. Seller of indulgences. 4. Official in the Inns of court. 5. Fellow. 6. Muscles. 7. Every where. 8. Wrestling. 9. Prize at a wrestling match. 10. Square, broadset fellow. 11. Lift. 12. Hinge. 13. At a run. 14. Top. 15. Wart. 16. Tuft. 17. Hair. 18. Ears. 19. Nostrils. 20. A small round shield. 21. Jester. 22. Buffoon. 23. Unseemly jests. 24. Take toll. 25. By God. 2(. · ound.

There was a Reeve, a Miller, a college Manciple, from the Inns of Court, a Pardoner and a Summoner riding at a trot and finally myself. There were no other people.

The Miller was quite a heavy man weighing some sixty stones. He was a big, stout fellow of good muscles and solid bones. He made a capital out of them and won the ram at any wrestling show. "He was a short-shouldered, broad chested and a broad-set fellow." He boasted that he could unhinge the doors of any house or take a run and break it with his head. His beard was red like a fox and it was as broad as spade. He had a wart on the top of his nose which was covered with a tuft of nair which were red. His nostrils were wide and black. He had a sword and a small round shield. His mouth was as wide as a furnace. He was a buffoon and he had a store of tavern stories which were mainly filthy. He was perfect at stealing corn and he knew how to realize toll thrice. By God he had a thumb of gold and stored grain with a view to make profit out of it all. He wore a blue hood and a white coat. He could play upon a bagpipe and he brought us out of the town playing on his bagpipe.

Inter Chapter Twentieth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S MILLER

Professor Alfred W. Pollard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales: The Prologue, Macmillan and Co., London.

A lively account of the rights and privileges of a Scottish miller will be found in Chap. XIII. of Sir Walter Scott's Monastery, and with some difference of terms this will apply very well to Chaucer's Miller. There was little free trade in milling in those days, and restrictions survived as late as the eighteenth century. Every one raising corn on a manor would have to take it to the manor mill to be ground, and thus, free from any check of competition, medieval millers became famous for their knavish thefts. In the Reeve's Tale Chaucer tells how two Cambridge clerks tried to protect the college corn by standing one where the corn went in, the other where the meal came out. But the Miller turned their horse loose and made it run away, and while they were trying to catch it he stole more than ever. Scott suggests that millers in those days had to be 'stout carles,' like the Miller of the Prologue, to silence complainants : and enforce their fines, when corn was taken to be ground elsewhere. The illustration in Ellesmere manuscript does justice both to our Millers's blue hood and to his bagpipe. As to the appropriateness of this last on a pilgrimage.

THE MILLER

The description of the Miller contains certain details that could hardly have become known to Chaucer during the course of the Canterbury pilgrimage. It may be replied that they were known to him, not in his capacity of ordinary human observer, but in that of omniscient narrator ; and this is the view I myself have always taken until recently. But as we find that, like a modern writer, Chaucer sometimes had laiving models for his portraits, and that

there is some evidence of a connection between the pilgrims met at the Tabard Inn, we may perhaps include the Miller also among the figures drawn from life.

It is well known that the Miller, who had drunk too much ale before the company set out from the Tabard and who when the Knight's Tale is ended is in the quarre some stage drunkenness, insists upon telling a tale instead of the Monk, whom the Host has called upon to follow the Knight His tale, he announces, is to be—

a legende and a lyf,
Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf,
How that a clerk hath set the wrightes coppe.

This announcement immediately brings a violent protest, not, as might be expected, from the London Carpenter, but from the Reeve, who in his youth had learned the carpenter's trade. Does Chaucer intend us to understand that the Miller's tale hit the Reeve by mere accident? The Reeve himself apparently did not think so. After the tale is told, he says:

This dronke miller hath y told us heer
How that bigyled was a carpenter,
Peraventure in scorn for I am oon.

Of course the hit may have been accidental, or it may have been only the evening before at the Tabard that the Miller both heard that the Reeve had learned the trade of Carpenter in his youth and took a dislike to him, but surely the simplest explanation is that Chaucer had in mind two persons from the same district—perhaps from the same manor—who had a long-standing quarrel. The Miller knows the Reeve's name—"leve brother Osewold," he calls him; and if there was no quarrel until the Miller announced the subject of his tale, why does Chaucer tell us that the Miller and the Reeve kept apart from the very first? Of the Miller he writes:—

A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne,
And therwithal he broughte us out of towne,

of the Reeve:

And ever he rood the hyndreste of our route.

The original cause of the enmity of the Reeve and the Miller is apparently not a matter of record, and we can hardly hope to discover it. But well-known facts about the organisation of mediaeval manors and the usual relations of millers and reeves have long ago been cited to account for their predisposition to quarrel. A mill—a Wind Mill or a water-mill was in usual appurtenance of a manor, and Thorold Rogers suggested that the obligation of all the tenants of the manor to have their corn ground at the manorial mill, together with the frequent suspicion of dishonest dealings on the part of the miller, would readily give rise to ill feeling between the reeve and the miller.

It is of course not to be supposed that the Miller of the pilgrim group is identical with the miller of Trumpington in the Reeve's Tale, although the Reeve is careful to draw a picture of the miller of Trumpington that might well have caused the other pilgrims to glance with amused curiosity at their fellow traveller. Not only is there much resemblance in appearance and physical traits, but similar tastes and accomplishments are ascribed to them. Both had a certain skill with the bagpipe. both were quick-tempered and ready to fight, and both were sly at stealing corn. Both portraits may well have been drawn from the same original; whether the original was of "ferthest Norfolk" or Trumpington, or of some other part of England, the result is not a type but a typical individual.

The discussion of the realistic treatment of characters in the tales, as distinct from the pilgrims themselves, does not lie within the plan of the present inquiry. But having pointed out the similarity of the Miller of the Prologue to the miller of the Reeve's Tale, one may perhaps be pardoned for calling attention to the astonishing portrait of the wife of the miller of Trumpington. She is certainly no artificially constructed type, but a living and highly individualized person—the daughter of "the persoun of the toun", excessively proud of

his kynrede and her nortelrye
That she hadde lerned in the nonerye.

And the twenty-year old daughter, if not depicted from actual observation, is at least drawn with a clear comprehension of the doctrines of heredity. She is the living image of her father—even to her "camuse nose".

On the basis of these evidences of definite observation, we may ask why Chaucer placed the Reeve's Tale at Trumpington, and what foundation of reality underlies its abundant local colour. Sir Roger de Trumpington was a member of the King's household and his wife, Lady Blanche, was closely associated with Philippa Chaucer as lady-in-waiting to constance of Castile. From them or one of them the poet may well have heard facts and incidents supplementing his own possible acquaintance with the place. But the connection of the Trumpingtons seems hardly adequate to determine the localization of the Tale. The earls of Pembroke also had lands in the immediate neighbourhood of Trumpington, but they had lands in too many parts of England to allow us to attach any special significance to this fact. It seems rather that we must look in other directions for the explanation.

The choice of Cambridge was no doubt connected with the choice of college boys as the chief actors in the intrigue and of Cambridge as the university to supply the boys. No doubt the Cambridge of Reeve's Tale is the artistic balance of the Oxford of the Miller's Tale, but behind the decision to use the university in either tale there may lie a motive capable of more or less positive definition.

The attention of court circles had certainly been specially focussed upon the two universities by the meeting of the

king's council at Oxford in July, 1388, and that of Parliament at Cambridge in September of that same year. That Chaucer was present on either occasion it is not necessary to suppose. The accuracy of the local color in the both the Oxford and the Cambridge story sufficiently attests his familiarity with both places. What is perhaps of importance is that many of the persons for whom he wrote had recently visited these places under conditions of special interests and were the more ready to enjoy stories connected with them. That both council meeting and parliament were dominated by the Gloucester faction may have lent the stories and added zest for the adherents of John of Gaunt and the king.

Cambridge, and particularly the king's Hall there—which figures in Chaucer's story as Soler Hall—had also a permanent claim upon the interest at least of the king, for it was the college at which he supported a number of scholars by special grants, which appear regularly in his household accounts.

This is not the proper occasion to discuss the realistic local color of the Oxford and Cambridge stories ; but I cann't refrain from pointing out that Professor Skeat was not justified in suggesting that "Chaucer must have thought Trumpington somewhat further from Cambridge than it really is, as he actually makes the clerks to have been benighted there." Surely the early closing of the college gates motivates the incident.

—*Manly*

The Manciple

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours[1] myghte take exemple
For to be wise in byynge of vitaille[2];
For, wheither that he payde or took by taille[3],
Algate[4] he wayted[5] so in his achaat[6]
That he was ay biforn and in good staat[7].
Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace[8],
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace[9]
The wisdom of an heepe[10] of lerned men ?
Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten[11],
That weren of lawe expert and curious[12],
Of whiche ther weren a duszeyne[13] in that hous
Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond
Of any lord that is in Engelond,
To maken hym lyve by his propre good[14],
In honour dettelees[15], but if he were wood[16],
Or lyve as scarsly[17] as hym list desire ;
And able for to helpen al a shire[18]
In any caas that myghte falle or happe;
And yet this Manciple sette hir aller cappe[19].

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1. Caterers. 2. Provisions. 3. Bought on credit. 4. Always. 5. Watchful. 6. Purchase. 7. State ; condition. 8. Favour. 9. Surpass. 10. Multitude. 11. Thrice ten ; thirty. 12. Experienced. 13. Dozen. 14. Goods (property). 15. Debtless. 16. Mad. 17. Frugally. 18. County. 19. Befooled them all.

There was a good natured Manciple of the inns of court. All buyers may learn from him how to wise in buying provisions. For whether he paid cash or bought things on credit he always made a good bargain for he used to watch the market most precisely. Is it not a marvel of God that an illiterate man could outwit the wisdom of a heap of learned men ? His masters—more than thirty at that time—who were experienced in law and out of whom about a dozen were in the inns of court, yet the Manciple befoold them all.

Inter Chapter Twenty First :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S MANCIPLE

A manciple (the derivation of the word seems uncertain) is a servant of a college or inn-of-court who purchases provisions under the direction of the cook and the steward. Chaucer's Manciple was attached to 'a temple,' i.e. to one of the two inns of court (inner and Middle Temple) which occupied the buildings of the old Knights Templar in the Strand at London. In an account of the Middle Temple (quoted by Robert Pearce, in his Guide to the Inns of Court (1855 ed., p. 276) from a manuscript of the time of Henry VIII. (Cotton MS. Vitell. c. ix.), the wages of the steward are given as 53s. 4d., the chief cook received 40s., while "the manciple, or steward's servant, his wages by the year" were 26s 8d. A note informs us, "also at Easter the cook's manciple has in reward of every gentleman of the house 12d. or therabouts," and if this refers to the same person his wage must thus have been considerably increased As Chaucer, however, plainly hints, the Manciple had ways of making money independently of his wages and tips. In the Talks by the Road the hint is repeated for when the Manciple lectures the Cook on his drunkenness, the tolerant Host remarks :

"But yet, Manciple. in feith thou art to nyce,
Thus openly repreve hym of his vice ;
Another day the wole, peraventure,

Reclayme thee and bringe the to lure,—
I meene he speke wole of smale thynges,
As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges:
That were nat honeste, if it cam to preef.
No, quode the Manciple, that were a greet mescheef:
So myghte he lyghtly bryng me in the snare;"

and to propitiate the already drunken Cook he gives him a drought of wine from a 'gourd' he carries with him. According to Mr. Saunders it is this gourd or bottle that he is carrying in his hand in the Ellesmere picture, and Mr. Saunders is probably right. His coat is blue; its lining, as well as the cape, hose, and purse, red.

———

The Reeve

The REVE was a sclendre[1] colerik[2] man,
His berd was shave as ny[3] as ever he kan ;
His heer was by his erys ful round y-shorn[4],
His tope was doked[5] lyk a preest biforn[6] ;
Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,
Y-lyk[7] a staf, there was no calf y-sene.
Wel koude he kepe a gerner[8] and a bynne[9] ;
Ther was noon auditour koude on him wynne[10].
Wel wiste[11] he, by the droghte[12] and by the reyn,
The yeldynge[13] of his seed and of his greyn.
His lordes sheepe, his neet[14], his dayerye[15],
His swyn, his hors, his stoor[16], and his pultrye[17],
Was hoolly in this reves governyng[18],
And by his covenant[19] yaf the rekenyng[20]
Syn that[21] his lord was twenty yeer of age ;
There koude no man brynge hym in arrerage[22].
There nas baillif, ne[23] hierde[24], nor oother hyne[25],
That he ne knew his sleighte[26] and his covyne[27] ;
They were adrad[28] of hym as of the deeth.
His wonyng[29] was ful faire upon an heeth,
With grene trees y-shadwed[30] was his place.
He koude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was a-stored[31] pryvely[32] ;
His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly[33]
To yeve and lene[34] hym of his owene good
And have a thank, and yet a gowne and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good myster[35] ;
He was a wel good wrighte[36], a carpenter.
This Reve sat upon a ful good stot[37],
That was al pomely[38] grey and highte Scot[39] ;
A long surcote[40] of pers[41] upon he hade,
And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this Reve of which I telle,
Biside a toun men clepen[42] Baldeswelle.
Tukked[43] he was as is a frere[44], aboute,
And ever he rood the hyndreste[45] of oure route[46].

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1. Slender. 2. Bad tempered. 3. Closely. 4. Clipped.

The Reeve was a slender, irritable man. His beard was shaven as closely as could be. His shorn hair came abruptly to a stop above his ears. His skull was shaved like that of a priest. His legs were fully long and lean and no calf was to be seen. He kept his garners and bins very trim. No auditor could gain a point on him. He could judge by watching drought and rain the yield of the crop. His master's sheep, his animals and hens, pigs, horses, dairies and stores were wholly trusted to his government By the terms of his contract he gave the account of every thing since his lord was but only twenty. No one had ever caught him in arrears. No bailliff, serf or herds men dared to kick for he knew their every trick. By those under him, he was feared like plague. He had a lovely dwelling on a heath which was shadowed with green trees above it, He was a better hand at bargains than his lord. He had grown rich and had a store of treasure which was well guarded and yet out it came to pleasure. He could cunningly please his lord so that the latter would give him gifts and thanks He was a first rate carpenter. The stallion cob he rode at a slow trot. It was dappled grey and was called Scot. He had a long surcoat of dark blue and he bore a rusty sword by his side. The Reeve whom I'm speakiug of came from Baldeswell, Norfolk. He had his gown trucked up under his belt like a Friar and he was always at the back of our cavalcade.

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5. Cropped; cut short. 6. In front. 7. Like. 8. Garner. 9. Bin. 10. Get the Better of him. 11. Knew. 12. Drought. 13. Return 14. Cattle. 15. Dairy. 16. Store 17. Poultry. 18. Control. 19. Agreement. 20. Account. 21. Since. 22. Arrears. 23. Neither. 24. Herdsman. 25. Farm servant. 26. Trickery. 27. Deceit. 28. Afraid. 29. Dwelling. 30. Shaded. 31. Provided with. 32. Privately. 33. Craftily. 34. Lend. 35. Handicraft. 36. Workman. 37. Nag. 38. Dappled grey. 39. Called. 40. Coat worn upon another. 41. Dark blue. 42. Call. 43. Tucked up. 44. Friar. 45. The last. 46. Company.

Inter Chapter Twenty Second :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S REEVE

It is fortunate that Chaucer's sketch of the Reeve presents no difficulties, as materials for illustrating it are unusually scanty. Except from the accounts of Robert Oldham, the bailiff of Cuxham in Roger's Agriculture and prices in England (Vol 1) there is little to be gleaned. In nothing that Oldham was a serf of the manor, Prof. Skeat adds "as reeves always were"; but the Oldham lived before the Black Death, in which the whole family perished, and it seems improbable that Chaucer's Reeve, who belongs to a period some forty years later, was a serf. The Ellesmere picture shows the Reeve wearing a blue coat, with a red hood and red stockings. From the Talks by the Road, in which he fell foul of the Miller for bringing a member of his old craft of carpentry into ridicule, we learn that his name was Oswald. It is perphaps note worthy that Chaucer makes him come from one of the eastern countries, with which his own family had connexion, and further localises him as belonging to a small place like Baldeswell.

(2) You will readily recall the picturesque and highly individualized description of the Reeve in the Prologue :

The Reve was sclendre, colerik man,
His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan ;
His heer was by his erys fulround y-shorn,
His tope was doked lyk a preest biforn ;
Ful longe were his legges, and full lene,
Y-lyk a staf, there was no calf-y-sene.
Wel coude he kepe a gerner a bynne ;
Ther was noon auditour koude on him wynne.

Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,
The ȝeldynge of his seed, and of his greyn.
His lordes sheepe, his neet, his dayerye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye,
Was hoolly in this reves governyng,
And by his covenant yaf to rekenyng,
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age ;
There koude no man bringe him in arrerage.
There nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother hyne,
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne ;
They were adrad of hym, as of the deeth.
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth,
With grene trees y-shadwed was his place.
He koude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was a-stored pryvely ;
His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly.
To yeve and lene him of his owene good
And have a thank, and yet a gowne and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good myster ;
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This Reve sat upon a ful good stot,
That was al pomely grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers upon he hade,
And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this Reve of which I telle,
Biside a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And ever he rood the hyndreste of oure route.

Three features of this discription first suggested that Chaucer had in mind a definite person. One was the statement that the Reeve came from Norfolk, beside a town called Baldeswelle : the second was the description of his house as situated on a heath and well shaded by green

trees; the third was the specific statement that he had charge of the manor since his lord was twenty years of age. The last two sounded like bits of personal observation by Chaucer, the first suggested the question why Baldeswelle—an insignificant village, far from London, almost in the "ferthest end of Norfolk"—should be mentioned, unless Chaucer had some particular reason for interest in it.

The main facts in regard to Baldeswelle—the modern Baldeswell—were not hard to find, Blomefield's great History of Norfolk tells us that it is a hamlet partly in the manor of Foxley, which in the fourteenth century belonged to the estates of the earls of Pembroke. These facts did not, however, suffice to explain why Chaucer's attention was attracted to the Reeve and especially why his presentation of him is always and everywhere charged with malice The description of his appearance might be merely in the interest of picturesqueness and verisimilitude. A slender, choleric man, with long, lean, calfless legs; close-shaven, short-haired, and docked like a priest; clothed in a long blue surcoat, with tails tucked into his girdle; riding a dapplegrey farm horse, and wearing by his side an old rusty sword. But his character, though drawn with a semblance of purely objective art, is carefully wrecked by one of those subtle touches of which Chaucer was so great a master. "Skilled in all kinds of farm work, as became the reeve of a manor, he was supremely skilled in dealing with officials above him and laborers below, and had been in complete control of the manor since his lord was twenty years of age. He had privily laid up wealth for himself and was so subtle that he was both thanked and rewarded by his lord for lending him what was really his own property."

Fortunately a study of the facts regarding the earls of

Pembroke and their estates threw some light on the subjects. John Hastings, second earl of Pembroke, whose father had died in 1348, came of age on September, 12, 1368. Before the following April he went abroad in the retinue of the Prince of Wales and, with the exception of brief visits to England, remained in foreign service until his death in 1375. Here, at once, is a curiously close agreement with the lines :

And by his covenant yaf the rekenyng
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age ;

On one the earl's brief visits home he arranged that if he should die without an heir, all his property that was transferable should go to his cousin Sir William de Beauchamp, younger brother of the Earl of Warwick, on condition that he would take the whole arms of Pembroke and get the king to allow him to assume the title of Earl of Pembroke. As a son and heir was born to Pembroke in September, 1372, the plan did not take effect. But as the heir was a minor on the death os his father in 1375 he and the estates which were held in chief fell into the hands of the king and provision had to be made for them. The heir was allowed to remain in the custody of his mother and grandmother ; the estates in England and Wales were variously disposed of. After a faithful inventory had been made, by two clerks appointed by the king, of the stock and other things in the lordships, manors, and land, including those assigned in dower to the earl's widow, Anne, the custody of two thirds of the lands in England exclusive of those in Kent was on January, 2, 1376 committed to the Countess Anne and her mother Margaret Marshall, the famous and powerful countess of Norfolk, daughter of Edmund de Brotherton and aunt of King Edward III. A week later, January, 29, certain manors in Kent were

committed to the custody of the King's Esquire, John de Beverle, and on March 9, 1378, King Richard granted the custody of the estates in Wales of Sir William de Beauchamp. In this last transaction the main pernors sureties for Sir William de Beauchamp were two. John de Beverle and Geoffrey Chaucer of London. Whether these mainpersons were personal or official we do not know, and we need not stop to inquire whether the appointment implies that Geoffrey Chaucer was a landowner, though we can hardly believe that either the king or the mother and grandmother of their would regard the responsibility of the sureties as of no importance. The other surety, John de Beverle, who had long been in service as one of the king's esquires, was a man of considerable wealth, as if evident from the numerous large grants made him to the king and the land transactions recorded of him and his wife. Moreover, it was to John de Beverle that the custody of the Pembroke estates in Kent had been granted in January, 1376.

The public, for which Chaucer wrote, would infallibly recognize immediately, his allusion to one of manors belonging to the Pembroke estates and would be interested in anything concerning the affairs of so great a family. Chaucer himself had additional personal reasons for interest, because of his relations with Sir William de Beauchamp in connection both with the Pembroke lands and with his own trail for the raptus of Cecila Chaumpaigne in 1380, when Beauchamp appeared as witness in his behalf.

On the mismanagement of some of the estates the records are interesting. Even before the death of the second earl two of his receivers had been called to account, as we learn from the Calendar of Close Rolls for 1374. After the death of the earl in 1375 we have no reason to believe

that the management improved while the estates were in the hands of the king. Sir William de Beauchamp was much engaged in the king's business in Scotland and France and from 1384 to 1392 was captain of Calais. He could hardly have given much personal attention to the lordships and land committed to him. In the autumn of 1386 investigation of his management was officially begun and in 1387 (February, 22 and October 6) an arrangement was made between Sir William de Beauchamp on the one side and the young earl's grandmother on the other (his mother having died in 1384). It was agreed that Sir William should be relieved of the custody lands and should receive the annual grant from the king of 100m. charged upon the estates and further should be free from any claim for waste committed after Easter next (i.e. 1388) on condition that he should appoint two of his council to meet two or three of the council of the countess and the young earl to view the waste in the Pembroke lands. The deputies were to collect what moneys they could to the profit of the said earl from those who had commited wastes.

From the facts just given it is evident that some of the Pembroke estates had been mismanaged from the time the second earl went abroad, soon after his twenty-first birthday and that some continued to be mismanaged at least until very near the time at which Chaucer was writing. On the mismanagement of the Norfolk lands I have as yet been unable to get any documentary evidence. They had long been in the sole custody of the young heir's grandmother, Margaret Marshall countess of Norfolk, for Anne countess of Pembroke had in 1376 granted to her mother both all her own property and the custody of all the lordships, manors and lands granted to her by the king as guardian of the heir of Pembroke. But Chaucer represents the Reeve of Baldeswelle as a rascal whose tricks might be suspected but could hardly be proved. How he obtained this information we can only guess. It is possible that he was chosen

as one of the two deputies of Sir William to view the waste committed on the lands in his custody. The other mainpernor John de Beverle, had died in 1381 and apparently had not been replaced. Chaucer had so far as we know, no official or other duties to prevent him from taking part in such as investigation. It may even be suspected that before this time he had been concerned about this matter. According to a recently discovered record on June, 23, 1383 he was granted permission to execute the controllership of wool, hides, and woolfells by Henry Gisors as deputy until Allhallows next (about four months) because 'he is like to be so much occupied upon particular business that for a certain time he may, not without grievous disturbance attend to that office", and on November, 25, 1384 he was given leave of absence for one month for the same reason Whether he viewed the waste or not, it is likely that as one personally concerned, he was present at the meeting held at Framlingham to discuss the transfer of the lands in Wales from the custody of William de Beauchamp to that of the Countess of Norfolk. If so he may, then and there, have heard reports of the tricky Reeve of Baldeswelle.

Three lines atleast, of the account of the Reeve sound as if Chaucer had visited Baldeswelle :

They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth,
With grene srees y-shadwed was his place.

The records indicate that Sir William de Beauchamp did not willingly give up the custody of the Pembroke, lands that had been committed to him, and it is perhaps not unjustifiable to assume that he and his friends among whom we can surely count the poet—took no little pleasure in this portrayal of the sly Norfolk Reeve, whose petty thieving had so long been successfully carried on under the very eyes of Sir William's antagonist, the masterful countess of Norfolk. Chaucer's malicious sketch must have been highly entertaining to the great folk at court, all of whom were certainly familiar with the facts concerning the Pembroke lands. *—Manly*

THE PARDONER

The Summoner

A SOMONOUR was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed[1] cherubynnes[2] face,
For sawcefleem[3] he was, with eyen narwe.
As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe,
With scaled[4] browes blake and pile[5] berd, –
Of his visage children were aferd[6].
Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge[7], ne brymstoon[8],
Boras[9], ceruce[10], ne oille of tartre[11] noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte[12],
That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes[13] white,
Nor of the knobbes[14] sittynge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek[15], oynons, and eek lekes[16],
And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood ;
Thanne wolde he speke, and crie as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn[17],
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A few terms hadde he, two or thre,
That he had lerned out of som decree,—
No wonder is, he herde it al the day ;
And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay
Kan clepen[18] *Watte* as wel as kan the pope.
But whoso kovde in oother thyng hym grope[19],
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie ;
Ay *Questio*[20] *quid juris*[21] wolde he crie.
He was a gentil harlot[22] and a kynde ;
A bettre felawe sholde man noght fynde.
He wolde suffre[23] ; for a quart of wyn,
A good felawe to have his concubyn[24]
A twelf monthe, and excuse hym atte fulle[25] ;
And prively a fynch eek koude he pulle[26] ;

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1. Fiery-red. 2. Cherub's. 3. Having a red pimpled face. 4. Scaly. 5. Thin. 6. Afraid. 7. Ointment made of protoxide of lead. 8. Sulpher. 9. Borax. 10. White lead. 11. Cream of tartar. 12. Bite 13. Pimples. 14. Boils. 15. Garlic. 16. Leeks. 17. Well in toxicated with wine. 18. Call ; name. 19. Test. 20. I question. 21. What is the law. 22. Fellow. 23. Allow. 24. Mistress. 25. Fully. 26. Swindle an ignorant person.

A Summoner there was with us. He had a red angel-like face. He had carbuncles. His eyes were narrow. He was as hot and lecherous as a sparrow, He had black, scabby brows and a thin beard. Children were afraid of his face.

No quicksilver, lead ointments tartar creams, boracic nor brimstone, it seems, could relieve him of his pimples or remove the boils from his cheeks. He loved garlic and onions and leeks and he loved to drink strong wine till all was hazy. Then he would shout and jabber as if he was crazy and would not speak anything but Latin. He had mugged up a few tags and would repeat them the whole day when he was drunk for he heard them every day. But if somebody could test him in other things, all his knowledge would fail. He would cry: I question, what is the law? He was a kind and gentle fellow—a better man one could not find. Just for a quart of wine he could lend his mistress for twelve month. Privately he could swindl ignorant people.

And if he foond owher[1] a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have noon awe
In swich caas, of the Ercedekenes[2] curs[3],
But—if a mannes soule were in his purs;
For in his purs he sholde y-punysshed be[4]:
'Purs is the Ercedekenes helle,' seyde he.
But wel I woot[5] he lyed right in dede[6],
Of cursyng oghte[7] ech gilty man him drede,
For curs wol slee,—right as assoillyng[8] savith;
And also war[9] him of a *Significavit*[10].
In daunger[11] hadde he at his owene gise[12]
The yonge girles of the diocise,
And knew his conseil[13], and was al hir reed[14]
A gerland hadde he set upon his heed,
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;
A bokeleer hadde he maad him of a cake.

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1. Anywhere. 2. Archdeacon's. 3. Curse. 4. Be punished. 5. Know. 6. Indeed. 7. Ought. 8. Absolution. 9. Beware. 10. Imprisonment of an excommunicated person. 11. Power. 12. Manner. 13. Secrets. 14. Adviser.

And if he found a rascal with a maid he would instruct him not to be afraid of the Archdeacon's curse unless he minded paying a sum. He would be punished in his purse only. "The money extorted is all the hell to be feared of for the Archdeacon's curse"——he said.

But I know it very well that he lied in what he said. Guilty men should be afraid of the course for it kills as surely as absolution saves the soul. We should beware of excommunication. He had the young people of the diocese within his power. He knew their secrets and they did what he said. He wore a garland set upon his head large as the holy bush upon a stake outside an ale house and he held a cake as his shield.

Inter Chapter Twenty Third :–

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S SUMMONER

The Summoner or Apparitor was the officer of the ecclesiastical court of the Bishop, or his subordinate, the Archdeacon. This court dealt with sins of immorality, withcraft, usury, simony, neglect of the sacraments, and withholding tithes or offerings, a list of offences taken from the beginning (D 1299-1320) of the tale about a wicked Summoner wich Chaucer puts into the mouth of the Friar. The Archdeacon extorted fines by threats of excommunication, the fact of excommunication, when notified to a civil magistrate procuring the offenders imprisonment (see below, 1.662). The Summoners made a living for themselves, over and above their lawful fees, be threatening to report people to the Archdeacon for real or imaginary offences, unless they were bought off. The Ellesmere MS. shows the Summoner in a blue jacket with scarlet pantaloons, whereas his official costume appears to have been of a tawny colour. He wears a garland and carries a cake as mentioned by Chaucer, and holds out a writ of summons in his hand.

THE SUMMONER

The Pardoner

With hym ther rood a gentil PARDONER
Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer[1],
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he soong *Com hider, love, to me!*
This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun[2],
Was never trompe[3] of half so greet a soun[4].
This Pardoner hadde heer[5] as yelow as wax[6],
But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike[7] of flex;
By ounces[8] henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And therwith he his shuldres overspradde;
But thynne[9] it lay, by colpons[10],oon and oon[11];
But hood, for jolitee, ne wered he noon[12],
For it was trussed[13] up in his walet.
Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet[14];
Dischevelee[15], save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glarynge[16] eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernycle[17] hadde he sowed upon his cappe;
His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe
Bret-ful[18] of pardon, comen from Rome al hoot[19].

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1. Comrade. 2. Burden. 3. Trumpet. 4. Sound. 5. Hair 6. Wax. 7. Hank. 8. Small portions. 9. Thin. 10. Strips. 11. One by one. 12. Did not wear. 13. Packed. 14. Fashion. 15. Dishevelled. 16. Staring. 17. Image of St. Veronica. 18. Full to the brim. 19. Which had been most recently received from Rome.

He had with him a gentle Pardoner a bird from chasing cross, and of the same feather who was just back from the court of Rome. He loudly sang *come hither, love, come to me*. The Summoner sang the refrain loudly, more uprorio-usly than the sound of a trumpet. The Pardoner's hair were yellow as wax, hanging down smoothly as a hank of flax. His locks fell down his head and overspread his shoulders. They fell thinly, like rat-tails, one by one. For fun, he wore no hood upon his head which lay packed in his bag. He aimed at riding in the latest mode. But for a little cap his head was bare and he had bulging eye-balls like a hare. He had sewed a holy relic on his cap. His wallet lay before him in his lap. It was full of pardons come from Rome all hot.

A voys[1] he hadde as smal as hath a goot[2];
No berd hadde he, ne never sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late y-shave;
....
But of his craft, fro Berwyk unto Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner;
For in his male[3] he hadde a pilwe-beer[4],
Which that, he seyde, was oure lady[5] veyl[6];
He seyde he hadde a gobet[7] of the seyl[8]
That Seint Peter hadde, whan that he wente
Upon the see, til Jhesu Crist hym hente[9].
He hadde a croys[10] of latoun[11] full of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges[12] bones
But with thise relikes[13], whan that he fond
A poure person dwellynge upon lond,
Unon a day he gat hym moore moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye;
And thus with feyned[14] flaterye and japes[15]
He made the person and the peple his apes.
But, trewely to tellen atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste[16];
Wel koude he rede a lessoun[17] or a storie,
But alderbest [18] he song an offertorie[19];
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche, and wel affile[20] his tonge
To wynne silver, at he ful wel koude;
Therefore he song the murierly[21] and loude.

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1. Voice. 2. Goat. 3. Bag. 4. Pillow-case. 5. Lady's (The Virgin Mary's). 6. Veil. 7. Afragment. 8. Sail. 9. Caught hold of. 10. Cross. 11. Alloy of copper and zinc. 12. Pig's. 13. Relics. 14. Feigned. 15. Jests. 16. Priest. 17. Passage of the Bible. 18. Best of all. 19. Sentences sung while the alms are being collected. 20. Polish. 21. The more merrily.

His voice was like that of a goat. His chin had harboured no beard nor would—his cheeks were as smooth as the barber had left them. But as regards his profession, there was no other such pardoner from Berwick to Ware. In his bag he had a pillow-case which he asserted was our Lady's veil. He asserted that he had a fragment of the sail that St. Peter had when he went upon the sea when Christ caught hold of him. He had a cross of metal set with stones and in a glass he had pig's bones. When he found a poor person in a country he exhibited these relics and made more money in a day than what the person could in two months. With his flattery and jokes he made monkeys of the priest and congregation. But to tell you the truth he was the noble priest in the church. He could read admirably passages from the Bible and tell stories but he was best at singing and an offertory. He knew very well that he would be required to preach when that song was sung. He could preach with his honey tongue and win silver. Therefore he sang merrily and loudly.

Inter Chapter Twenty Fourth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S PARDONER

A Pardoner was a trafficker in papal pardons or indulgences. In the early Church a penitent as a condition of receiving absolution would have to fast (*i. e.*, abstain from meat), or do other penance, for so many days, according to the gravity of his sin. Later on, a payment of money to an approved charitable purpose was accepted as an equivalent for so many days' penance, and certificate of such payment was called a pardon or indulgence. The indulgence was a remission of ecclesiastical penance, not a remission of sins, but its true character was easily obscured, and a theory of a 'treasury' of super abounding merits of the Virgin and saints 'promulgated by Pope Clement V. in 1350' introduced new confusion. In order to raise money for building or repairing a church or other good object, men were sent all over Europe offering indulgences to all who contributed a certain sum. Moreover these authorized alms-gatherers were outrivalled by irregular ones, who, having obtained, or forged, a license from a Pope or Bishop exhibited relics, to the veneration of which, so they pretended, special indulgences had been attached in the case of those offering money for the privilege. Popes, Bishops, and Kings all tried at various times to suppress these irregular Pardoners, but the traffic in both authorized and unauthorized indulgences went on till the Reformation. An indulgence to those contributing to the war against the Turks was the earliest dated printed document (1454). One in 1517. issued by Leo X, to raise funds for the completion of S. Peter's at Rome, provoked Luther's revolt.

"The Ellesmere Manuscript shows the long yellow hair, spread in parted locks upon the Pardoner's shoulders, his surcoat of scarlet trimmed with white, and his scarlet cap with the vernicle in front. His stockings are blue. In his hand he carries the cross of laton, a kind of brass or mixed metal, coloured at the points, yellow, red, and blue. The white lambskin wallet, bearing such precious relics, rests on the horse's back, and is carefully guarded by strings, which the Pardoner has hung round his neck."

PARDONER.

Research and criticism are pretty generally agreed about the short story to which the Pardoner gave classic shape. Its 'analogues' are now counted in legions, as prehaps they were in Chaucer's own day. Tyrwhitt spotted an Italian specimen a hundred and sixty years ago, in 1881 Richard Morris noted the earliest known form of the tale, parallels have been cropping up everywhere ever since, and no doubt they will continue to appear as long as there are new stocks of folk-lore to examine. No one any longer expects to find Chaucer's precise original As far back as the 13th century, the story had filtered from the Orient into the deep well of European example from which all ecclesiasts could draw. We may choose to fancy that Chaucer himself first heard it from the mouth of a preacher. At some time, as we now see, somebody—whether Chaucer or another-enriched the tale by fusing into it a mysterious personage engaged in the Quest for Death. Ten Brink long ago believed, and Professor Carleton Brown now believes that this figure is the Wandering Jew casting his shadow over the Three Robbers; but the strange shape of the Old Churl as evoked by the Pardoner—if shape he might be called—has seemed to others even more portentous, Whatever meaning you put upon him, surely in this particular tale he is an emanation of Chaucer's art alone .. ...But praise of the Pardoner's narrative art is not relevant to this study, and indeed it has now become superfluous. In 1886 W. S. Clouston remarked that Chaucer tells the tale in a manner that is superior to any other version in prose

and verse"—a moderate judgment that no one will question, even after enjoying the glitter of 'The King's Ankus.'"'

Unhappily, a sense of proportion has too often been lacking in admirers of the prize exemplum—for it was an "exemplum," and nothing more, to Chaucer's Pardoner. Sometimes you wish his narrative art had not been so impressive, since then no one could have lifted a 'perfect short story' out of its context or thought of it as an end in itself. Chaucer never meant it to be so taken, Reading it in and out of context are two quite different things. But the 'riotoures thre' seem to hypnotize many readers into overlooking or resenting the fact that Chaucer had other things to do than merely tell a fine story. To Lounsbury, the 'long disquisition in which the Pardoner indulges on the evil effects of drunkenness and gaming' was an 'intrusion of irrelevant learning' which 'breaks the thread of the tale......and adds nothing to its effect." The heresy is still extant. As late as 1935, Mr. Carleton Brown (following the lead of Dr. H. B. Hinckley') felt he had to 'account for' the irrelevant intrusions that Lounsbury reprobated. These troubles will be discussed later. At the moment it is enough to say that they result from mis-understanding of Chaucer's design and may be attributed to the spell cast by the great tale.

Of the 'credibility' of the Pardoner and his revelations, it is safe to say that no responsible critic has really doubted it durıng the last sixty years. Editors are still bound to warn beginner against the myth of monstrous unlikelihood which Jusserand undertook to dispel in 1880. They must till point out that the Pardoner of Chaucer's fiction is no more strange than the Pardoner of historic fact. They must still refer to the convention of the self-confessor in medieval satire which links the Wife of Bath to the Old Woman in the Romaunt of the Rose and the Pardoner to False Seeming. It is also well to be reminded of the immediate inspiration which the ecclesiast may have got from his moist and corny ale—though I have heard Professor Kittredge says that one drink would hardly account for the

result, especially when the Pardoner had a cake for shoeing horn. And, lastly, no one who has listened to intimate autobiography in the smoking room of a transcontinental train need feel troubled by the Pardoner's abandon. As Ten Brink remarked long ago the rogue 'unmasks his trade and practices with that shamelessness and barefaced frankness which the atmosphere of the Canterbury Tales requires.' Jusserand's classic fantasy (which, by the way, must not be taken as literal comment) expands this statement with persuasive eloquence :—

On the further bench of the tavern the pardoner remains still seated. There enter Chaucer, the knight, the squire, the friar, the host-old acquaintances. We are by ourselves, no one need be afraid of speaking, the foaming ale renders hearts expansive ; here the secret coils of that tortuous soul unfold to view ; he gives, us the summary of a whole life, the theory of his existence, the key to all his secrets. What matters his frankness ?—he knows that it cannot hurt him ; the bishop has twenty times brought his practices to light, but the crowd always troops round him. And who knows if his companions—who know if his more enlightened companions, to whom he shows the concealed springs of the automation—will. tomorrow believe it lifeless.

Later on in this essay, I shall point out how, by skilful manipulation, Chaucer practically leaves his Pardoner with no other choice than to speak exactly as he did.

Various other critical agreements can be reviewed as quickly. The most important of these admits the debt which the whole scheme owes to the medieval sermon. For while Chaucer sees the Pardoner as anything but a parson, he does make him preach a queer sort of exhibition sermon which is undoubtedly a masterpiece in its given setting. It has been, and still, is, misunderstood even by some who have a deep and lively interest in the 'medieval mind ' But everybody now understands that somehow or other Chaucer got himself steeped in all the dyes of traditional preaching

before he set about creating the Canterbury Tales and several of the pilgrims in it. We have long known his familiarity with the stores of example from which he furnished the Pardoner with other material besides the 'Three Robbers' tale. Brave attempts, not altogether successful, have been made to exhibit several of the Tales, the Pardoner's among them as more or less 'typical' medieval sermons. And though this 'sermon' is certainly not 'typical,' Chaucer's very departures from the type imply thorough acquaintance with it. A study of the Parson's tale and the Pardoner's use of it will probably satisfy most readers as to Chaucer's knowledge of the sermon stuff. If it does not, they may fall back on Dr. G. R. Owst's impressive studies of medieval preaching which. extravagant as they are in their general claims of value, do succeed in showing that practically every detail of the Pardoner's practice and utterance can be paralleled in the homilies, the tractates, the sermon manuals, or other records relative to preaching. The 'lost soul' whom Chaucer inflicts on the Pilgrimage fairly recks of the medieval pulpit: he is a supreme example of the Preaching Fox.

Some of Chaucer's reading was much more secular than sermons, as Professor W. C. Curry has proved to the shocked admiration of scholarship in his essay 'The Secret of Chaucer's Pardoner.' From a study of the physiognomy literature, Mr Curry shows that the ecclesiast had the physical characteristics of a type of unfortunate known in those writings as eunuchus ex nativitate. But no gentle reader need consult the originals in so far as they concern the Pardoner, for there is no 'secret' of this sort about him Chaucer himself revealed the 'secret' with sufficient clarity, as Mr. Curry points out, in one bleak line :

I trowe he were a geldying or a mare

—it does not matter which And this is what everybody, medieval or modern, would 'trowe' him to be from his appearance and voice alone. The fact remains, however, that

Chaucer did draw on the physiognomies, if for no other purpose than to make his figure 'scientific' or to amuse himself otherwise: he was concerned with 'minute accuracy' in respects of which Jusserand was probably unaware. Certainly, he knew those writings, for he mentions one of them; and the 'typical' traits, there set forth, of the eunuchus ex nativitate went, beyond dispute, into the pardoner's portrait. Contrary to Mr. Curry's assumption, I very much doubt that any of the pilgrims (except Chaucer and the Physician) were familiar, or needed to be, with the Physiognomies; and if I agreed with Mr. Curry, I should regret that he came too late to supervise the reading of the Lady Prioress. But there is no need to minimize what he has added to our knowledge of Chaucer's method if not to our understanding of the Pardoner.

This is perhaps the point at which to speak of Professor J. M. Manly's suggestion that the Pardoner and other pilgrims were drawn from life models. His 'new light on Chaucer' illumines a good many dark comers and re-illumines many familiar ones: it blends with any clear doctrines about Chaucer ever presented. As for the Pardoner, it has localized him more precisely than ever he was before. During the 1380's and 1390's, his house of Rouncivale, an interest of Chaucer's patron. John of Gaunt, was much in the public eye, and not always favourably. We learn, for example, that real pardoners of that house had been notoriously converting collections to their own use, just as their fellow in fiction boasted of doing. Records of this fact, published by the late 'Professor Samuel Moore' before New Light appeared make it 'difficult to believe' that a contemporary audience would not link the person and goings-on of the Pardoner with some actual rogue Further 'his new Italian fashions' as Mr. Manly calls them, are distinctive features that Mr. Curry's physiognomy books obviously cannot account for If you pause to think of it, a most striking peculiarity of the portrait, not mentioned in New Light, is its combination of Pardoner and eunuchus in one person. This is certainly 'typical', as all records and

traditions testify decisively. There are good reasons for thinking that, along with many other elements, Chaucer put traits of some well known individual or individuals into the Pardoner's complex.

—*Sedgewick*

THE PARDONER

If the reader entertains any doubt concerning the personal satire in the treatment of the Summoner and the Friar and the tales they tell, he will hardly be able, I think, to resist the evidence that in portraying the Summoner's 'freend and compeer," the Pardoner of Rouncival, Chaucer must be admitted to have described a person who could not fail to be immediately recognized by those for whom he wrote. It is true that the Pardoners of Rouncival were a common object of Satire, and that they remained active for more than a century; the churchwarden's accounts of St. Mary-on-the Hill, Chester, for 1536-7, contain entries of payments from pardoners for the privilege selling indulgences: 'Received of two Pardoners viij'd; of a pardoner of St. Chad, vij'd; of pardoner of our Lady Rouncival, viij'd." But they were by no means the only pardoners available for Chaucer's satire. The Piers Plowman poems signalize :

Pieres the pardoner of Paulines doctrine; and Friar Daw Topias lists two others with those of Rouncival :

I trowe thou menys the pardonystres
Of seint Thomas of Acres,
Of Antoun, or of Runcevele,
That rennen so faste aboute.

Chaucer's reasons for choosing a pardoner of Rouncival are, however, not difficult to discover. In the first place, Rouncival means, in this connection, not the distant convent of Nuestra Senora de Roncesvalles in Navarre, but the cell of that convent (a hospital and chapel) founded by William Marshall the younger, earl of Pembroke, in 1229, at Charing, just outside London. The convent possessed a wedge-shaped piece of land fronting the river and extending back to the roadway, the open space where Charing Cross

stood (now occupied by the statue of King Charles I) was more extensive than facing the river The position and extent of the chapel and other buildings are shown in Wyngaerde's well known sketch and in an interesting drawing in the Gardner collection (at the Guildhall) both reproduced in Sir James Galloway's The story of St. Mary Rouncival. The nearness of the Hospital of Our Lady of Rouncival to Westminster and its consequent familiarity to Chaucer's readers needs no emphasis.

But this was not only reason why members of the court circle at least would have been interested in any reference to Rouncival. After the Black Death, the Hospital, which previously had been very prosperous, had few brethren left to uphold its interest and its affairs fell into great confusion. It attracted the attention of the crown as affording opportunities of preferment for the clerks of the chapel royal and the royal household.

In 1379 the Chapel and lands were seized under the statue for the forfeiture of the lands of "schimastic aliens" and on May. 8, 1382, the wardenship was conferred on one of the king's clerks, Nicholas Slake. He, it seems, had no aversion to pluralities, being prebendary of the chapel of St George, Windsor, of Wenlakesbarn, of Erdington in Bridgenorth of Shirecote in Tamworth, of the royal free chapel of Hastings, and rector of St. Mary Abchurch. In 1391, he was appointed archdeacon of Wells and in 1396 dean of St. Stephen's Chapel Royal, Westminster. Slake is further known to history because he was one of the three persons captured by the citizens in 1399 in vain effort to get hold of the king when Henry of Derby was about to seize the throne

Slake's possession of the wardenship of Rouncival did not long remain unquestioned. The prior and brethren of Rouncesvalles appear to have commenced a process to regain their property and on 23, April, 138', it was restored to the prior after an inquisition held by John de Neuenton formerly king s escheator for the country of Middlesex In

1389, at the supplication of the king's kinsman, Charles Navarre, one Garcias, a cannon of Roncesvalles was ratified as "warden of the Chapel of Rouncival by Charyncroix" but—unless the Chapel had been separated from the Hospital—his tenure was brief, for in 1390 a patent roll records John Hadham, the king's clerk as "warden of the Hospital of St. Mary of Ronsyvale by Charryng by West-minister", and he was succeeded on September, II, 1393, by John Gedney. Chaucer's successor as clerk of the king's works.

An additional reason for Chaucer's interest in Rouncival and its pardoners was that John of Gaunt was one of the patrons of the Hospital. In 1372 he gave letters of introduction to three of its "precursors" to ecclesiastics of the realm who were to further them in their collection of alms for the Hospital.

The history of the Chapel and Hospital of St. Mary of Rouncival, however, interesting, must not detain us now. It may be read in the volume by Sir James Galloway cited above and in the late Canon Westlake's History of the Parish Gilds, to both of which I am much indebted. Our principal concern is with the pardoners representing or professing to represent the Hospital.

Only two months after his appointment as warden, Nicholas Slake secured from the king a writ of aid (dated 18. July, 1382) for Ralph Archer, his proctor, to arrest and bring before the king and council all persons whom he shall prove to have collected alms in the realm as proctor of the Hospital and converted the same to their own use. Again in 1387, there seem to have been an outbreak of unauthorized sale of pardons, and we are told by H. C. Lea in his History of Indulgences that the sale of pardons flourished with especial vigour after the Jubilee year 1390. "During 1391 and the following years he (Boniface IX) granted Jubilee indulgences to churches and cities throughout Italy and Germany until there was no place so

small that had not enjoyed them." There is every reason to believe that England also got her share.

Whether the Pardoner of the Canterbury group was duly authorized to collect for the Hospital, retaining a part of his gatherings for his own enrichment or was one of the pretenders referred to above is not entirely clear. Many Chaucer scholars seem to hold that his bulls were forgeries and that he made no report to anyone, but Chaucer gives us, I think, no reason to believe this, and as pardons could be brought wholesale by the pardoners at about a penny a piece, there seems no sufficient reason why his traffic may not have been entirely legal and authorized. Yet we must remember that Chaucer was writing for contemporaries thoroughly familiar with the facts and that his statements are often not to be taken at their face value but ironically. We ourselves can recognize the irony in his encomiums on the Doctor of Physic, the Reeve, the Summoner, the Cook, and several others among the pilgrims. It is possible therefore that the Pardoner's pardons had not actually "come from Rome al hoot", but were as spurious as were as his relics.

It may be that the Pardoner's faculty of preaching marked him out for special recognition. Not all pardoners, or quaestors, were allowed to preach. Indeed there are several canons, dating from early in the thirteenth century to far beyond Chaucer's time, which specifically prohibit from preaching all quaestors, with the exception of friars and others specially found and declared fit for that function. The Chapel and Hospital of Rouncival, like the mother house, were under the Augustinian rule, and we are apt to think that because he preached the Pardoner must have been in holy orders; but there are several reasons for think

ing that Chaucer's Pardoner, if in holy orders at all, was certainly in very minor ones. He does not appear to have observed the tonsure, which was strongly insisted upon not only for priests but also for deacons, and according to his statement to the Wife of Bath he "was about to wedde a wyf." We need not believe that he really had any such intention, but at least neither that expert in matrimony nor any of the other pilgrims expressed any doubt that he had the right to do so, and the author of the Tale of Beryn —who, though not authoritative, may be taken as representing public opinion—does not hesitate to represent him as proposing marriage—perhaps not seriously—to the tapster of the inn at Canterbury. Originally indulgences had been granted only through the clergy, but the practice of using laymen as collectors grew, and St. Thomas Aquinas boldly pronounced indulgences not to be sacramental but purely matters of jurisdiction.

On the whole, the evidence seems to indicate that so striking a person as the pardoner, with his long flaxen hair, his new Italian fashion, and his glaring eyes must have been nearly as familiar to Chaucer's readers as was Rouncival itself, which they passed daily as they journeyed between London and Westminster.

—*Manly*

THE HOST

The Host

Now have I toold you shortly, in a clause[1],
The staat[2], tharray[3], the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this compaignye.
In Southwerk, at this gentil[4] hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is tyme to yow for the telle
How that we baren us[5] that like nyght,
When we were in that hostelrie alyght[6];
And after wol[7] I telle of our viage[8]
And al the remenaunt[9] of oure pilgrimage.

But first, I pray yow of youre curteisye[10],
That ye narette it nat[11] my vileynye[12],
Thogh that I pleynly speke in this mateere[13]
To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere[14],
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely;
For this ye knowen al-so[15] wel as I,
Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,
He moote[16] reherce, as ny as ever he kan,
Everich a word, if it be in his charge[17],
Al speke he never so rudeliche or large[18];
Or ellis[19] he moot telle his tale untrewe,
Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, althogh he were his brother;
He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak hymself ful brode[20] in hooly writ,
And wel ye woot no vileynye is it.
Eek[21] Plato seith, whoso that kan hym rede,
'The wordes moote be cosyn[22] to the dede'

Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
Heere in this tale, as that they sholde stonde;
My wit is short[23], ye may wel understonde.

Greet chiere[24] made oure hoost us everichon[25],

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1. Briefly. 2. State. 3. The array, (dress equipment). 4. Comfortable. 5. Conducted ourselves. 6. Alighted. 7. Afterwards. 8. Journey. 9. Rest. 10. Kindness. 11. Not importe

Now I have told you shortly the rank, the position, the dress, the number of our assembly in his company in Southewark gathered in that high class hostelry known as the Tabbard Inn situated close to the Bell.

But now the time has come for me to tell you how we behaved that evening. I will begin with the very beginning and then I will report our journey stage by stage. First, I beg of you in courtesy not to condemn me as unmannerly if I speak plainly and without concealing anything and give account of all their words and dealing, using their very phrases as spoken by them. For you all know very well that one who repeats a tale after somebody must relate it as correctly as he can, reporting every single word of it he remembers however rudely spoken and unfit they might appear to be or else the tale he tells would be regarded as untrue, or he would make and invent new phrases and words. He must not spare even his brother and if he says one word he must also say the other word and Christ himself spoke plainly and you know it very well that there is nothing unbecoming in what he spoke. And Plato has also said for those who have the power to read that the word must be as near to the deed as possible.

Further I beg you to forgive me if I neglect the order and degree, you may well understand that I'm short of intelligence.

Our host entertained each one of us full-heartedly.

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to. 12. unseemly behaviour. 13. Matter. 14. Face ; countenance. As. 16. Must. 17. Responsibility. 18. Freely. 19. Otherwise. 20. Plainly. 21. Also. 22. Cousin. 23. Inferior. 24. Entertainment. 25. Every one.

And to the soper sette he us anon,
And served us with vitaille at the beste :
Strong was the wyn and wel to drynke us leste[1].

A semely[2] man OURE HOOSTE was with-alle
For to han been a marchal[3] in an halle.
A large man he was, with eyen stepe[4],
A fairer burgeys is ther noon is Chepe ;
Boold of his speche, and wys and well y-taught,
And of manhod hym lakkede[5] right naught.
Eek therto he was right a myrie man,
And after soper pleyen he bigan,
And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges[6] ;
And seyde thus ; 'Now, lordynges[7], trewely,
Ye been to me right welcome, hertely[8];
For by my trouthe[9], if that I shal nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye[10]
At ones in this herberwe[11] as is now.
Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how ;
And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght[12],
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.

'Ye goon to Canterbury—God yow speede[13],
The blisful martir[14] quite[15] yow youre meede[16]!
And, wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye ;
For trewely confort[17] ne myrthe is noon
To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon ;
And therfore wol I maken yow disport[18],
As I seyde erst[19], and doon yow som confort.
And if you liketh alle, by oon assent[20],
Now for to stonden at[21] my juggement,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye[22],
To-morwe, whan ye riden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule that is deed,
But[23] ye he myrie, smyteth[24] of myn heed[25] !
Hoold up youre hond, withouten moore speche.

---

1. It pleased us. 2. Suitable. 3. Master of ceremonies. 4. Bright. 5. Lacked. 6. Bills. 7. Sirs. 8. Heartily. 9. To

Every one was given a place and supper was served. He served us with the finest dishes and the wine was very strong and we were pleased to drink it.

Our host was a very striking and remarkable man who was fit to be a marshall in a hall. His eyes were bright and his girth was rather wide. There was not a worthier citizen in Cheapside. He was bold and straightforward in his speech and yet was wise and discreet and full of fact. He lacked no manly attribute and he was a jolly good fellow. After meals he humorously started talking about sports and many other things, when we had paid our bills he said, "Truly gentlemen, you are very welcome and I cannot think when—I am not exaggerating – have I seen a more sprightly gathering here. I have not seen such a gathering this year, no. I think you are out for some fun and as it happens a thought has just occurred to me and it will cost you nothing

You are going to Canterbury. May God give you the best of luck. May the blessed St. Thomas help you with your misery. I have no doubt that you would pass your time by narrating tales and stories for there would be no fun in riding along the road, dumb as stones, let me just propose a device for your pleasure If it pleases you and if you agree and if you promise to abide by my decision, playing your parts exactly as I suggest. Tomorrow as you ride along the way—I assure you will like the proposal ; which if you don't you can take my head. Those who accept my proposal, without any more words may please raise their hands.

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speak the truth. 10. Such a cheerful gathering. 11. Inn. 12. A joke has occurred to me. 13. Cause you to prosper. 14. St. Thomas. 15. Requite. 16. Reward. 17. Pleasure. 18. Diversion. 19. At first. 20. Common consent. 21. Abide by. 22. Doing exactly as I say. 23. Unless. 24. Strike off. 25. Head.

Oure conseil[1] was nat longe for to seche[2];
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys[3],
And graunted hym withouten moore avys[4],
And bad him seye his verdit, as hym leste[5].
'Lordynges,' quod[6] he, 'now herkenth[7] for the beste ;
But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn[8] ;
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn[9],
That ech of yow, to shorte[10] with your weye,
In this viage shal telle tales tweye[11]—,
To Caunterburyward, I mean it so,
And homward he shal tellen othere two,—
Of aventures[12] that whilom[13] han bifalle[14].
And which of yow that bereth hym beste of alle,
That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
Tales of best sentence[15] and moost solaas[16],
Shal have a soper at oure aller[17] cost,
Heere in this place, sittynge by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And, for to make yow the moore mury[18],
I wol myselven gladly with yow ryde,
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde[19] ;
And whose wole my juggement withseye[20]
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouche-sauf[21] that it to be so
Tel me anon[22], withouten wordes mo[23],
And I wol erly shape[24] me therfore'.
This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also
That he would vouche-sauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been oure governour[25],
And of our tales juge and reportour[26],
And sette a soper at a certeyn pris[27],
And we wol reuled[28] been at his devys[29]
In heigh and lough[30], and thus, by oon assent,
We been acorded[31] to his juggement.
And therupon the wyn was fet[32] anon ;
We dronken, and to reste wente echon[33],
Withouten any lenger taryynge[34].

1. Opinion. 2. Seek. 3. Hesitate. 4. Deliberation.

We readily agreed and the proposal was hardly debatable nor was it debated. We all agreed to it and bade him issue what commands he wanted to.

"Sirs," he said, "now listen for your good and please do not treat my opinion with disdain. This is the point and I will speak precisely. Each one of you shall narrate two stories to pass the time smoothly on our outward trip to Canterbury and two more tales on our way back. And then the man who tells the best tale and satisfies the standards of good morality and general pleasure shall have as his reward a sumptuous supper as the cost of all here in Tabbard Inn in this very hall when we come back from Canterbury. And in the hope to make you happy and give you company I will go along with you at my own cost and I will be your guide and judge and those who won't obey me shall pay what we spend on our journey. If you agree to this, tell me of your acceptance without wasting more time or words and then I will arrange things for you.

His suggestion was agreed upon and we swore accordingly and we requested him to do as he pleased and to act as a judge of our tales and to fix a limit for the supper. We told him that we would abide by his judgements and submit to his instructions. We drank wine and then retired.

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5. As it pleased him. 6. Said. 7. Listen. 8. Disdain. 9. To tell you precisely. 10. To Shorten. 11. Two. 12. Adventures. 13. Formerly. 14. Happened in the past. 15. Meaning. 16. Amusement. 17. Of all. 18. Pleasure. 19. Guide, 20. Contradict. 2I, Grant. 22. At once. 23. Without wasting any more words. 24. Arrange. 25. Umpire. 26. Umpire; reparter. 27. Certain price. 28. Guided. 29. According to his direction. 30. In all matters. 31. Agreed. 32. Fetched. 33. Each. 34. Delay.

Amorwe[1], whan that day gan for to sprynge,
Up roos oure Hoost and was oure aller cok,
And gadrede[2] us togidre[3] alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel moore than paas[4],
Unto the wateryng[5] of Seint Thomas ;
And there oure Hoost bigan his hors areste[6]
And seyde, 'Lordynges, herkneth, if you leste[7] :
Ye woot youre foreward[1] and I it you recorde[9].
If even song and morwe-song accorde,
Lat se[10] now who shal telle the firste tale.
As ever mote I drynke wyn or ale,
Whoso be rebel to my juggement
Shal paye for all that by the wey is spent !
Now draweth[11] cut, er that we ferrer[12] twynne[13].
He which that hath the shorteste shal bigynne.
Sire Knyght, 'quod he, 'my mayster[14] and my lord,
Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord[15].
Cometh neer,' quod he, 'my lady Prioresse,
And ye sire Clerk, lat[16] be your shamefastnesse[17],
Ne studieth[18] noght ; lay hond[19] to, every man.'

Anon to drawen every wight[20] bigan,
And, shortly for to tellen as it was,
Were it by aventure[21], or sort[22] or cas[23],
The sothe[24] is this, the cat fil[25] to the knyght,
Of which ful blithe[26] and glad was every wyght :
And telle he moste[27] his tale, as was resoun[28],
By foreward and by composicioun[29],
As ye han herd ; what nedeth wordes mo ?
And whan this goode man saught[30] that it was so,
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his foreward by his free assent,
He seyde, 'Syn I shal bigynne the game[31],
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes[32] name !
Now lat us ryde, and herkneth[33] what I seye.'
And with that word we ryden forth oure weye ;
And he bigan with right a myrie cheere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

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1. In the morning. 2. Gathered. 3. Together. 4. Walk ing. pace. 5. Watering place. 6. Cause to stop. 7. If you please.

In the morning our host woke us up much as a cock does by its crowing. He gathered us together and we rode at a rather low pace to the watering place of St. Thomas and there the host stopped us and said, "Sirs, listen! If it pleases you; you know our decision and I beg to remind you of that. If you still hold to what you told us yesterday let us see who shall tell the first tale. As ever I may drink wine or ale, whosoever goes against my judgments shall have to pay all the expenses. Now let us draw lots before we separate any further and he who has the shortest will begin." "Sir knight," he said, "my lord and my master, now you draw lots because that is my agreement. Come near my Lady Prioress and you Sir Clerk leave your modesty. Please do not hesitate. Begin please, begin every man" Every one began to draw lots and merely as a matter of chance and accident the shortest lot fell to the Knight which was a matter of gladness to everybody. And now he must tell his tale according to the terms of the agreement which has just now been told to you There is not much to be said. When it fell upon him, the Knight, like a courteous and obedient gentleman, began and said "Since I have to begin, I welcome the lot in the name of God Now let us ride and listen to my tale."

With that word we rode forth and he began his tale in a merry way and proceeded in this manner.

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8. Agreement. 9. Remind you of it. 10. Let us see. 11. Draw lots 12. Farther. 13. Depart. 14. Master. 15. Agreement. 16. Do away with. 17. Modesty. 18. Reflect. 19. Begin. 20. Man. 21. By a mere chance. 22. Destiny. 23. Accident. 24. Truth. 25. Fell. 26. Joyous; happy. 27. Had to tell. 28. Reasonable. 29. Contract. 30, Saw. 31. Sport. 32. In God's name. 33. Hear.

Inter Chapter Twenty Fifth :—

LITERARY NOTICES OF CHAUCER'S THE HOST

In testing the nature of Ch ucer's portraits, let us begin with that of the host Everyone will admit that he is clearly strikingly, and consistently individualized His manner of controlling the pilgrims ; his varying attitudes toward the Knight, the Prioress, the Franklin the Merchant, the Cook ; his personal reaction to the tales and words of the Pardoner, the Shipman, the Monk and Chaucer himself, his language; his crafty questioning of the Canon's Yeoman—are all in perfect harmony with the striking characterization of him given in the Prologue :

A semely man Oure Hooste was with-alle
For to han been a marchal in an halle.
A large man he was, with eyen stepe.
A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe ;
Boold of his speche. and wys, and well y-taught,
And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.
Eek therto he was right a myrie man,
And after soper pleyen bigan,
And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges ;

So cl arlv and consistently is he an individual that we are not surprised when the Cook, re enting what we should nowadays call his "kidding" turns on him with a protest and calls him by name :

"Thou seist full sooth," quod Roger. "by my fey :
But "Sooth pley," quaad pley," as the

Flemming seith :

And therefor, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,
Be thou not wroth, er we departen heer,
Though that my tale be of an hostileer ;
But natheless I wol not telle it yit ;
But er we parte, y-wis, thou shalt be quit "

Was there, we ask, actually a Harry Bailly who in Chaucer's day kept the Tabard Inn in Southwark. Fortunately we can answer this question. if not perfectly at least with a satisfactory approach to fullness and accuracy. There was a Harry Bailly of Southwark and he was an innkeeper. Of the seven records concerning him, three were published long ago in Notes and Queries ; the other four have only recently been discovered.

In the Parliament held at Westminster in 50 Edward III (1376-7) and again in that held at Gloucester in 2 Richard II (1378-9) Henry Bailly was one of the two burgesser representing the borough of Southwark He was by socia l and official experience, obviously a man fit :

For to han been a marchal in an halle.

It can hardly be doubted that this is the same man who appears in the following entry of the Subsidy Roll for Southwark in 4 Richard II (1380-81): ',Henricus Bailly, Ostyler, Christian Uxor eius-i js."

It is a curious and interesting fact that although this record of Henry Bailly and his wife in the Subsidy Roll has long been known, neither its original discoverer, nor any later scholar has observed that Henry Bailly himself was one of the four controllers of the subsidy for Southwark. Both the counter roll of the controllers, Henry Bailly, Richards atte Vyn, Roger Chandeler, and William Malton, all of Southwark, and their visus of the account of the collec-

tors, are preserved under the shelfmarks 184/30 and 184/32 in the Record office, where they were recently found by Professor Rickert when she examined them for the purpose of ascertaining whether they gave any more information than had been pointed She may publish later a study of the controllers and collectors here it may suffice to say that Henry Bailly was not the only innkeeper in the list.

Like other student of Chaucer, I had always supposed that he had neglected to tell us the name of the Host's wife and I, therefore, took the liberty of taking somewhat playfully the contrast between the name given in the record and her character as sketched by the Host himself after the telling of the Tale of Melibeus. Recently the indefatigable researches of Professor Rickert have discovered that the Host does tell us his wife's nam : He says ;

I hadde lever than a barel ele
That Godbelief, my wyf, hadde herd this tale !

All editors have written "goodbelief as two words, without capitalisation, as being epithets describing "wyf " But in the fourteenth century records of Kent Professor Rickert has found thirty instances of "Godelief" (in various spellings) as a woman's name. This settles the Chaucer passage ; the Host tells us that "Godelief" was his wife's name. What are we to say ? It is possible, but hardly probable, that "Godlief" was atinized in the record as "Chr stian" or that the English "G dlief" was used as a sort of bye form of ' Christian". It is possible of course, that the Christian to 1380 had died and that Herry Bailly had taken another wife by the time Chaucer had the Canterbury Tales in hand And finally it is of course possible th t Ch istian was s ill living but that Chaucer—although he calls her husband by his right name—preferred for rea-

sons best known to himself, not to use the right name of the wife :

The answere of this I lete to divynis

The newly discovered name contrasts as strikingly with the character described in the passage containing it as did the name supplied by the the record, but the reader may write his own comment.

That Herry Bailly, Hostiler, was still alive at the time usually assigned by scholars to the Canterbury pilgrimage is proved by three recently discovered references. On October 5, 1387, as we learn from the Class Rolls, he was in the parish of Lesnes near Greenwhich and was one of the witnesses to a deed of gift of 100s made by Walter Geste of that Parish to Sir Thomas Bradfelde, clerk. Four years later,—January 17, 13 92, according to the Close Rolls—he was appointed special coroner "to view the body of John Polle, wickedly slain in Bermondsey, which, contrary to law, had long lain unburied because the coroners of Surrey, who lived in distant parts, had neglected their duties." Again, on April, 25, 1393, Herry Pailly of Southwark was appointed special coroner to view the bodies of Adam Batman and John Turnour there wickedly slain and act as pertains to the coroner's office. By the statute of Westminster coroners were required to be "chosen of this most lawful and wisest knights, who can, may, and will best attend upon that office." These restrictions were later released but the Rolls record the rejection of man appointed corner for lack of proper qualifications in land and local domicile. The office was one appropriate to the Henry Bailly, burgess of Southwark, who had represented that borough in parliament.

Do all these entries relate to the same man ? Though not absolutely certain, it can hardly be doubted. That in a

small town like Southwark there were at the same time two innkeepers named Hanry Bailly, no one, I fancy, will be disposed to maintain. We may therefore safely conclude that the host of Tabard in Chaucer's day actually was named Harry Bailly and consequently that the Host of the Canterbury Tales was modelled upon him.

It is strange that scholars—none of whom, perhaps, would seriously dissent from this conclusion in regard to the Host—have not been moved to inquiry whether any other members of Chaucer's famous gallery of portraits had licing models. But, I, at least, cannot criticize them, for the motive which led me to insti ute this inquiry was, not the actuality of the name and portrait of the Host, but certain details in the account of the Reeve.

Manly

NOTES

1. **Whan that**—equivalent to when. **Soote**—The true adjectival form is *sweet*. The final *e* is the sign of the plural.

2. **Droghte**—drought. **Perced** — pierced. **Roote**—root.

3. **Licour**—sap.

4. **Of which vertu**—*i.e.*, by whose virtue ; *which* has the force of a genitive here. **Vertu**—strength of force. Lat. *virtus*, manly excellence.

5. **Zephirus**—west wind. **Eek**—also.

6. **Holt**—copse.

7. **Croppes**—shoots. **Yonge sonne**—the sun begins its journey at the spring equinox ; so the sun is young.

8. **Ram**—also called Aries, the sign of the Zodiac. In Chaucer's time the sun entered the sign—Aries—on March 12 and left it on April 17. **Y-ronne**—*y* softened from *ge*—is the sign of the past participle.

9. **Foweles**—birds. Generic sense.

11. **Hir**—genitive plural. **Corages**—spirit, mind, disposition. This sense has now become obsolete. Old French, connected with *cor*, heart.

12. **Folk**—neuter, plural.

13. **Palmeres**—pilgrims from the Holy Land with a palm branch. A palmer is often distinguished from a pilgrim as having no dwelling place, visiting all shrines, vowed to poverty, etc **For to Seken** -*for to* is the sign of the infinitive. **Strondes**—shores.

14. **Ferne**—also occurs as *f·orren*, *ferren* (adj. and adv.) meaning afar ; distant. **Halwes**—saints ; so the shrines or

relics of saints. **Kowthe**—known. The plural of the participle of *can* used as an adjective here: hence the final *e*.

16. **Caunterbury**—one of the chief resorts of pilgrims in the Middle Ages There was a regular service of horses between Southwark and Canterbury.

17. **The hooly blisful martir**—St. Thomas of Canterbury. Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, quarrelled with the King about the privileges of the clergy. A compromise was made, but on December 29, 1170, he was murdered in his own cathedral by four knights. He was at once acclaimed a martyr, and Henry II did public penance at the tomb of the murdered archbishop on July 12, 1174. Thomas was canonized in 1173. His shrine at Canterbury was held in the greatest reverence, and the pilgrimage was extremely popular. The shrine was destroyed in 1538. **Seke**—visit.

19. **Holpen**—originally a strong verb. **Seeke**—sick.

18. **Bifil**—elliptical for 'it befell' (it hapened).

20. **In Southwark at the Tabard**—*N.B.* Stow (*Survey of London*) writes: 'From thence towards London Bridge, on the same side, by many fair inns for receipt of travellers, by these signs, the Spurre, Christopher, Bull, Queen's Head, etc. Amongst which the most ancient is the Tabard, so called of the sign, which.........is of jacket or sleeveless coat......". **Lay**—lodged.

22. **Corage**—intention.

23. **Hostelrye**—inn.

24. **Wel nyne-and-twenty**—the correct figure is not stated here; or perhaps about twenty-nine is meant

25. **By aventure. y-falle**—*i.e.*, met together by chance. **Aventure** - O. Fr. *aventure*, Lat. *adventure*, a thing about to happen to anybody.

Felaweship—company. From *feoh*, money, and *lag*, to lay; so those who lay out money in a common cause, or those who engage in some common undertaking

29. **Atte beste**—at the best.

30. **Was to reste**—*i.e.*, had gone to rest. The verb of motion is omitted,

31. **So**—so that.

33. **Forward**—a promise or agreement.

34. **Ther as I yow devyse**—*i.e.*, to the place which I am going to, I shall describe accurately to you.

36. **Pace**—proceed.

37. **Me thynketh**—it seems to me, Impersonal use. **Accordaunt**—according to.

40 **Whiche they weren**—we should say what they were.

41. **Array**—dress, equipment.

43 **A knight**—*N.B.* Froissart's description of Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, is supposed to be the original of Chaucer's knight. **Worthy**—a reference to his social rank or distinction.

45. **To riden out**—technical sense of riding on military expeditions or in search of adventure. **Chivalrie**—first the position and character of a knight, then bravery or prowess in war; here warlike glory.

46. **Curteisie**—refinement of manners as contrasted with the behaviour and speech of a rustic.

48. **Ferre**—farther. Comparative degree.

49. **Hethenesse**—heathen or non-Christian countries.

50. **Worthynesse**—moral excellence.

51. **Alisaundre**—Alisandre in Egypt. Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, took Alisandre in 1365, but had to abandon it later.

52. **He hadde...bigonne**—He had sat at the head of the table, a seat of honour.

53. **Aboven alle nocions**—*i.e.*, above men of all and every rank. **Pruce**—Prussia. *N B.* The German knights were often helped by English knights and squires against the Lithuanians.

54. **Lettow**—Lithuania. **Reysed**—gone on a military expedition.

55. **No Cristen..degree**—*i.e.*, no Christian of his rank or position had so often gone on expeditions.

56. **Gernade**—Granada in Spain. The city of Algezir was taken from the Moorish King of Granada, in 1344" (*Tyrwhitt*). **Seege**—siege. **Be**—been

57. **Belmarye**—one of the kingdoms of Africa.

58. **Lyeys**—Layas in Armenia. Pierre de Lusignan took Layas about 1367. **Satalye**—ancient Attalia. Satalie was taken by Pierre de Lusignan in 1361.

59. **Grete See**—pr bably the Mediterranean.

60. **Armee**—an armed expedition by sea or land.

61. **Feith**—Christian faith. **Tramyssene**—in Africa.

63. **Lystes**—enclosed space for a tournament. **Thries**—thrice. **Ay**—ever.

64. **Ilke**—Same.

65. **Somtyme**—once upon a time. **Palatye**—in Anatolia.

66. **Agayn**—against. **Another hethen**—another heathen lord.

67. **He hadde . prys**—He won great renown.

69. **Port**—demeanour.

70. **Veleynye**—unfit speech, the speech of a rustic.

71. **Maner wight**—kind of person. *Maner* ——when it means kind or sort, is without '*of*' following

72. **Gentil**—"having the character appropriate to one of good birth."

74. **Hors**—neuter, plural. **Gay**—Showily dressed.

75. **Fustian**—a kind of coarse cloth made of cotton and flax. **Gypon**—quilted doublet worn under the coat of mail.

76. **Bismotered**—soiled: rusted over. **Habergeon**—hauberk or coat of mail.

77. **Viage**—voyage.

78. **And wente........ pilgrymage.**—Evidently the knight vowed a pilgrimage in case of his safe return.

79. **Yong Squier**—a youth of good birth in the service of a knight; a young knight not old enough to display his own banner.

80. **Lovyere**—lover. Derived from the weak verb—*lovien*—**Lusty**—gay. **Bachelor**—also means a squire.

81. **Lokkes**—locks, curls. **Crulle**—curly. **As**—as if. **Leyd**—laid. **Press**—instrument exercising pressure. Dative Case.

83. **Or evene lengthe**—neither too tail nor too short.

84. **Wonderly**—wonderfully. **Delyvere**—free from encumbrance; therefore, active, agile.

85. **Chyvachie**—expedition oa horseback; raid.

87. **Born hym weel**—acquitted himself well. **Space**—time. **As...space**—in so short a time.

88. **Lady Grace**—lady is an uninflicted genitive.

89. **Embrouded**—embroidered. **Meede**—meadow.

91. **Floytynge**—playing on the flute.

95. **Endite**—write.

96. **Juste**—joust, tourney, tilt. **Purtreye**—draw.

97. **Nyghtertale**—at night time. Literally, the time or number of night.

98. **He sleep......nyghtyngale**—he slept no more than a nightingale. A reference to the practice, according to courtly love. *Sleep* is a preterite.

99. **Curties**—*i. e.*, experienced in the manners and etiquette of the court.

100. **And carf ....table**—*N.B.* One of the duties of a squire was to carve before the company. Forks were not used. The carver grasped the meat with the left hand, while he held the knife in the right hand. To touch the

meat with the right hand was a mark of ill breeding. Only two fingers and the thumb of the left hand were to be used

101. **Yeman**—ranked below a franklin. **He**—refers to the knight, not to the squire. Both squire and yeoman were the knight's servants in the feudal sense. **Na mo**—no more.

102. **Hym liste**—it pleased him. Impersonal construction.

103. **Cote.........grene**—green coat and hood were the traditional dress of a forestor.

104. **A sheef.........arwes**—goose feathers were generally used for pluming an arrow.

105. **Under his belt**—the arrows were habitually carried in the belt.

106, **Dresse**——set in order. **Takel**——archery-gear, arrows.

107. **With fetheres lowe**—feathers are said to be 'low' when they are cut short: 'high' when they are left long and deep. Arrows with low feathers are light and swift, and do not droop in their flight.

108. **A myghty bowe**—a long bow (which was prescribed for the use of the yeomen).

109. **A not-heed**—crop-head, a head with hair cropped short.

111. **Bracer**—a guard for the arm in archery. **Gay**—means here bright in colour.

112 **Bokeler**—a small round shield.

114. **Harneised**—mounted. The sense of ornamentation with fittings of some precious metal.

115. **Cristophere**—St. Christopher was the patron saint of field-sports. He presided over the weather, and was therefore the guardian saint of foresters. **Sheene**—bright.

116. **Bawdryk**—a belt that passed over one shoulder and under the opposite arm, and the wearer's sword was suspended from it.

118. **Prioresse**—Lady Superior of a Convent.

119. **Coy**—shy, reserved. Lat. *quietus*. *Coy* is old French.

120. **Seint Loy**—"St. Eligius, a French bishop, who when asked by his master, King Dagobert to swear upon the relics of the saints. burst into tears and refused. The king thereupon believed the statement without an oath." The prioress, therefore, swears by one who would not swear.

121. **Cleped**—called.

123. **Entuned**—intoned. **Semely**—suitably, becomingly.

124. **Frenssh she spak**—*N.B.* It was the French taught at the Benedictine Nunnery at Stratford, and it was different from the Parisian French Chaucer was familiar with both. **Fetisly**—gracefully.

127. **At mete.........with alle**—she was well instructed in table manners.

129. **Wette**—wetted.

130. **Kepe**—keep watch.

132. **In curteisie..... leste**—all her pleasure was bent on cultivating the manners of the court.

133. **Over lippe**—upper lip.

134. **Coppe**—cup. **Ferthyng**—a mere speck. Now used of a small coin.

135. **Grece**—grease.

136. **Raughte**—reached, stretched out towards. Preterite of *reche*. **Mete**—the sense of food in general.

137. **Sikerly**—certainly. **Desport**—pleasantry.

138 **Amyable of port**—pleasant in behaviour.

139. **Peyned hire**—took trouble. *Peyned* is used as a reflexive verb. **Countrefete**—imitate or affect. **Cheere**—behaviour.

140. **Ystatlich**—stately.

141. **Holden......reverence**—regarded as worthy of reverence.

146. **Of smale houndes**—some small dogs. Partitive genitive.

147. **Wastel breed**—cake bread of the best quality.

148. **Soore**—sorely. **Wepte**—weep. A preterite.

149. **Men**- *i. e.*, one. Indefinite personal pronoun. **Yerde**—rod. **Smerte**—smartlv, sharply.

150. **And al .....herte** - it was all because of her tenderness of feeling.

151. **Wympul**—a woman's head-dress It first appeared in England towards t e end of the twelfth century It was the same thing as the coverchief or veil **Pynched**—closely plated.

152 **Tretys**—well-shaped. Old French *N.B.* "Most of the epithets applied to women by Chaucer are conventional phrases taken from the *Rom-d -la Rose.*" **Her eyen ......glas**—grey eyes were a feature of beauty in the Middle Ages.

155. **I trowe—I** think

156. **Hardily**—certainly.

157. **War**—aware.

159. **A peire of bedes**—a full set of beads , a Rosary, called a pair because they were generally two-lengths, the shorter one being often carried in the hand, fastened to the little fin"er by a ring, the longer one being slung about the arm. **Gauded**—furnished with beads, called *gauds*. The gauds were the larger beads of the Rosary, differing in colour and material from the smaller ones.

161. **Crowned A**—surmounted by a crown.

162. **Amor......omnia** - love conquers all.

164. **That.........chapeleyne**—chaplain originally meant amanuensis, secretary ; priest was a later meaning *N B* "The attendant of the Abbess upon solemn occasions, one of whose duties it is to bear her superior's crozier, is called 'chaplain' though she does not dischar e any priestly functions." **Preestes thre**—*N B.* In a monastery or convent there were several altars at which daily Mass had to be said and each priest could say but one Mass a day. So there might have been three priests at the convent of Stratford. But later only one priest is mentioned, and the tale told by

him is known as *The Nonnes Preestes Tale*. In line 24 Chaucer gives the number of the company as 29 ; if we add two more priests who do not appear later, the number would be 31. Two of the priests do not later appear, and five of the artisans, mentioned in line 301, do not later appear So the actual number of the company, including the poet himself, comes to 23.

165. **A fair**—a fair one. **For the maistrie**—as if aiming at mastery ; as regards authority.

166. **Outridere**—the name of a monk who rode to inspect granges, etc **Venerie**—hunting. "The favourite amusement of both clergy and laity in England in the Middle Ages." Hawking and fowling were as popular as hunting.

168. **Deyntee**—choice of excellent.

169 **Men myghte......heere**—*N.B.* The knights used to have their bridles hung with bells, and the bridles rang as they rode The clergy imitated the practice from the knights. Wyclif censured this practice among the clergy.

171. **As loude...chapel belle**—" The chapel bell, in short, was outdone by the bells on the horse's trappings ; probably it sometimes did not ring at all "

172. **Celle**—a small monastry or nunnery. **It** was usually at some distance from the mother house, and was kept by two or three monks only, and there was laxity in monastic discipline. **Kepere of the celle**—the monk was a prior.

173 **Seint Maure or of Seint Beneit**—St. Benet or Benedictus was the founder of the Benedictine order of monks St. Maure was his pupil, and established the rule of St. Benedict in France.

174. **Som-del streit**—somewhat strict.

175. **This......pace**—this very monk would have little regard for the rule of St. Benedict and St. Maure as being out of date. He wanted to keep with the times.

176. **Heeld.........space**—*i.e.*, followed the new spirit of the times.

177 **Yaf**—gave. **Pulled hen**—plucked hen. **He yaf . ... hen**—he bothered little about the text **Text**—any statement committed to writing.

179. **Cloysterles**—outside for cloister *i.e.*, a convent or a monastic house.

180. **Til**—to.

182 **But.........oystre**—but he gave little value to such a text.

184 **What**—why. **Wood**—mad

185. **Upon............poure**—*i. e.*, by pouring over a book always in a cloister.

186. **Swynhen**—labour.

187 **Austyn**—St. Augustine The duty of manual labour was recommended for he monk in one of his letters. He did not draw up a rule of monastic life. **How ......served**—it would be no good to the world if the monks were to take to manual labour ; the monk has a better way of servi g the world. The monk thought otherwise than St. Augustine.

188. **Lat ....reserved**—Augustine should better keep manual labour for himself.

189. **Prikasour**—one who practised pricking or hard riding. (from pricking the horse by the spurs) "Monks and priests had originally been permitted to hunt only when game increased to such an extent as to damage the crops This was always the case where the people were forbidden to destroy any game, hence the monks were never at a loss to justify their favourite amusements." The degeneracy of the religious orders is painted here with Chaucer's geniality of observation . nd outlook.

191-192. **Of pryking .... spare**—*i.e* he delighted to ride hard and hunt the hare because he would spare no expense for this purpose

193. **Y-purfiled**—trimmed. ornamented at the edge.

194. **With grys**—grys is the fur of the grey squirrel. *N B* Grys was costly fur. A priest who had taken a vow of poverty, should not have worn grys. Ordinances wear

issued again and again, forbidding the priests to wear the fur. Wolsey issued such an ordinance as late as 1519. **The fyneste of a lond**—*i. e*, the finest fur to be had in a country.

197. **Love-knotte**—a twisted loop. **Gretter**—larger.

198 **Balled**—bald. It has also been explained as round or protuberant like a ball.

199. **Enoynt**—anointed Past participle

200. **In good poynt**—in good condition *Fr. embon point.*

201. **Stepe**—glittering, bright

202 **Stemed**—glowed **Leed**—copper or caldron.

203. **Souple**—supple. **Estaat**—condition

204. **A fair prelaat**—*i. e.*, a sleek, well-fed, carefree priest.

205. **Forpyned**—wasted away by torment.

206. **A fat swan**—a great delicacy in the Middle Ages

207. **Palfrey**—saddle horse.

209. **Lymytour**—a friar licensed to beg for alms within a certain limit.

210 **Ordres foure**—The Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Carmelites and the Augustinians.

211. **Daliaunce**—gossip, light talk

210-211 **In alle... langage**—*V.B* The friars (mendicant orders) originally led a holy, simple and hard life, owning no property. In the days of Chaucer they had taken to evil ways Chaucer's intention is to satirize them and paint a true picture of the time.

214 **Unto......post**-he was a worthy representative of the order to which he belonged Chaucer does not certainly mean it In his district he was familiar with the franklins, and with respectable women He reflects more of worldly spirit than of holy living.

216 **Frankeleyns**—the franklins were landowners of free but not noble birth. **Contree**—district

218 **He hadde...—confession**—*i.e*, he would hear con-

fessions of sins, made by penitents and pronounce pardon (known as *absolution*); of course this pardon was conditional on the contrition and amendment of the sinner, which the Friar excused for payment of a sum.

219. **Curat**—parish priest, vicar.

220. **For of his ordre .. .... licentiat**—*i.e.*. the claimed that he was licensed by the Pope to hear confessions, independently of the local ordinaries.

"The Friar had no authority to absolve from ordinary sins without special permission from the parish priest But in great matters the p rish clergy had no jurisdiction. These could be dealt with only by a special license from the Pope, which the friar had obtained."

222. **Absolucioun**—formal declaration of forgiveness of sins by priest.

223. **He was...penaunce**—*i e.*, he would let off a sinner for payment in money and did not demand contrition or amendment of the sinner.

224. **Wiste** - knew 3rd person preterite of *witen*, **Pitaunce**—allowance of food

225 226 **For unto.........Y-shryve**—the idea is this: pay liberally to a friar who is poor and humble and the sins of a penitent are remitted at once. **Y shryve** *i e.*, shriven To shrive is to impose penance on and administer absolution-to.

227 **Dorste**——preterite singular of *dar*. **Avaunt**—boast.

229-230. **For many a man.........smerte**—this is how the friar reasons: Many are so hard-hearted that they cannot weep though they are sorely afflicted for their sins; they should pay liberally to the poor friars and have their sins remitted. Note how the friar took advantage of the innocent belief and ignorance of the people.

233. **Typet**—cape. **Farsed**—stuffed **Khyves**—*N B.* Women in those days prized knives as a gift, for they too wore knives like men.

236 **Rote**—fiddle with three strings.

237. **Yeddynges**—songs. **Of yeddynges........pris**—he carried away the prize in song incontestably, **Utterly** —*i. e* , entirely.

239 **Champioun** —prize fighter.

241. **Tappestere**—barmaid—*stere* is a feminine ending.

242. **Bet**— —better. **Lazar**——leper. **Beggestere**—*i.e* , beggar-woman.

243 245. **For unto .....aqueyntaunce**—an estimable man as he was t suited not his position to have acquaintance with sick lepers **Swich**—such. **Acorded**—suited.

246 **Honeste**—respectable. **Avaunce**—advance or promote his interests.

247. **Poraille**—poor people.

248. **Vitaille**—victuals, provisions Old French *victuals* from Lat *victualla* from *vivo*, live **But al.........vitaille**—he would prefer to have acquaintance with rich people and sellers of provisions for he would gain something from them

249–250. **And over al......servyse**—and wherever there was a prospect of profit, he was courteous and offered his services humbly. **Over al**—everywhere.

251. **Vertuous**—capable

252 **He.........hous**—in the monastic house of which he was a member, he was the best beggar. Chaucer points out how fallen the friar was from the original vow of poverty, in his self-seeking spirit and greed.

253 **Sho**—a small coin. It has been explained as *shoe*

254. **In principio**—in the beginning "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God"—

254—255 **So pleasaunt ....wente** —*i e* , he read the opening verses of St John's Gospels so pleasan ly that he would not depart without a farthing from the poor widow. **Er** etc before

256. **His purchas......rente** *i e*.. he made more money begging than his regular income. Of course, he had no

regular income because he was vowed to poverty. **Purchas** – gifts acquired

257. **Rage**—romp, toy wantonly.

258 **Love-dayse**—days for settling disputes by arbitration.

259—261. **For there......pope**—On love-days he could be of much service He was not then like a poor and humble friar with a ragged cloak such as a scholar wore, but he behaved like a lord or like a pope.

262 **Semycope**—short cope.

263. **Rounded**—stood out in a round shape. **Presse**—mould.

264. **Lipsed** lisped, spoke in artificial accents. **Wantownesse**—mannerism of speech, affection.

270. **Forked berd** beard having two points. Beards were cut, in those days, into fanciful shapes

271. **Motteleye**—motley, striped clothing.

272. **Flaundryssh bevere hat**—Flanders beaver hat.

274 **Resons**—arguments, sentences.

275. **Sownyng .....wynnyng**—*i.e.*, proclaiming always the increasing profit he was making.

276. **The see ...kept** *i.e.*, the seas were guarded. **For any thing**—in spite of any obstacle, or at any cost.

277. **Middelburgh**—important for cloth trade between 1384–1388. Middleburgh stood opposite to the mouth of the Orwell, where Harwich now is. Orwell is a river of Suffolk.

278. **Wel.........selle**—he knew how to make profit by changing French crowns. **Sheeldes**—French crowns (coins worth 3s. 4d). The value of the French crown varied and he could make profit in exchange.

279. **Bisette**—employed,

280. **Ther......dette** nobody knew that he was in debt.

281. **So estatly...... gouvernaunce**—he managed things with such a show.

282. **Chevyssaunce**—usury. It implies both borrowing and lending at an excessive rate of interest.

285. **Clerk**—scholar.

286. **That......y-go**—who had long devoted himself to the study of logic. Logic was one of the liberal sciences or arts studied at the medieval university.

288. **Nas**—not was. **And......undertake**—a scholar was proverbially lean.

289. **Sobrely**—staid.

290. **Overeste**—uppermost. **Courtepy**—short cloak.

291. **Benefice**—ecclesiastical living.

292. **Ne......office**—nor was he so worldly-minded as to be keen on getting a living.

293. **Levere**—comparative of *leef, lief.* **Hym......have**—it was pleasanter for him to have.

294. **Clad......reed**—*i.e.*, in black or red binding.

295. **Aristotle**—the schoolmen of the Middle Ages based their philosophy on Aristotle.

296. **Fithele**—fiddle. **Sautrie**—psaltery or a small harp.

297. **But al.........philosophre**—but although he was a philosopher. Here 'philosopher' means an alchemist who searched for the philosopher's stone that would turn all base metals into gold. Chaucer has a fling at the search for the philosopher's stone. The Oxford scholar was a philosopher because he was a student of Aristotle ; an alchemist was also a philosopher in another sense. The Oxford scholar was poor unlike the alchemist, also a philosopher.

Hente—receive.

301-302. **And bisily.........scoleye**—earnestly prayed for the souls of those who gave him wherewithal to carry on his study. *N B.* Scholars in the Middle Ages were mostly poor men's children and depended on charity for their education. Chaucer gives a typical picture here. **Scoleye**—study. Old French.

303. **Cure**—care.

304. **Noght.... neede**—he was discreet in speech.

305. **And that.... reverence**—whatever he said, he said with due regard to form and content and in a spirit of reverence.

306. **Ful of hy sentence**—full of deep meaning.

307. **Sownynge...speche**—his speech was well grounded in moral excellence.

309. **War**—wary, cautious. The title, Sergeant of the Law, was given to those who graduated in law at one of the Inns of Court. The King's letters patent sometimes would appoint him Judge.

310. **Parvys**—church-porch. The parvis of St. Paul's in London was a resort for lawyers and their clients.

311. **Ther**—*i.e.*, at the parvis. **Ful.........excellence**—distinguished.

313. **He semed swich**—*i.e.*, he seemed to be richly gifted wise and worthy of respect.

314 **Justice..... assise**—judges who were sent out once a year to visit the country where they were to try cases, were called judges of assize.

315. **By Patente ....commissioun**—*N.B.* The King's letters patent would make the sergeant a judge. Special writs (commissions) were also issued to meet individual cases or to go into private wrongs.

316. **Science**—knowledge.

317. **Of fees.........oon**—*N.B.* It was an abuse of his privilege. As a judge of assize he could not accept fees or robes from anybody but the king. As a sergeant he might receive them from his private clients.

318. **Purchasour**—conveyancer, buyer-up of land. **Noon**—none.

319. **Fee symple**—an estate held in fee simple is the one which is the owner's absolute property, and which he can leave to anyone he chooses. **In effect**—in reality. **Al...effect**—all property he acquired, he held with the right of disposing it as he pleased (the property was not necessarily to pass to his legal heirs).

320. **Infect**—invalid.

323-324. **In termes.........falle**—he could cite in pedantic phrases all cases and legal decisions that had been recorded since the time of William the Conqueror. **Termes**—terms ; legel jargon. **Doomes**—judgments.

325. **He coude..... thyng**—*i.e.*, he could take up a law-suit. **Endite**—draw up in a legal form.

326. **Pynche at**—find fault with.

327. **And rote**—and he knew every statute entirely by heart. **Pleyn**—entirely. **By rote**—by heart.

328. **He rood but hoomly**—*N.B.* The sergeant wore a long robe like a priest, with a cap and hood and a white cord of silk. It was of a mixed colour (*medlee*). But when he rode as a judge, he did not wear "a medlee cote."

329. **Ceint**—girdle. **Barres**—stripes across a girdle.

331. **Frankeleyn**—the term was used of a class of land-owners of free, but not noble birth in the 14th and 15th centuries. They ranked below gentry.

333. **Sangwyn**—ruddy. *N.B.* Complexion or tempera-ment was determined by the four humours—blood (*Sang-uine*), phlegm (*phlegmatic*), choler (*choleric*), black bile (*melancholy*). Sanguine will imply (full-blood).

334. **Sope in wyn**—a piece of cake dipped in wine.

335. **To lyven......wone**—it was ever his habit to live in pleasure.

336. **Epicurus owene sone**—a devotee of pleasure. Epi-curus was a Greek philosopher who taught that pleasure is the highest good in life. Pleasure did not, however, mean sensual pleasure, though later Epicurus's doctrine came to be interpreted as the pursuit of sensual pleasure.

33 -338. **That......parfit**—who held the view that sheer (sensual) pleasure was indeed perfect happiness. He identi-fied pleasure with happiness.

340 **Seint Julian**—the patron saint of hospitality There is the following legend about Saint Julian. Once he was hunting a stag; the stag prophesied that he would kill his father and mother. To evade the fulfilment of the prophecy, he left his country, and married abroad the rich heiress of a castle. Once when he was away, his parents visited the castle, and they were hospitably entertained by his wife. On his return he got suspicious, and slew his parents. When he discovered his mistake, by way of atonement, he founded

a hospital and he came to be called *hospitalor*, or the good harbourer. **Seint.........contree**—*i.e.*, he was very lavish in his hospitality.

341. **Was......oon**—never varied in quality—was always after one standard.

342. **Envyned**—store with wine.

344-345. **On fissh......drynke**—there was such a plenty of fiesh that one might say that food and drink overflowed in his house.

346 347. **Of alle......year**—*i.e.*, there was plenty of all (dainties) that one could think of according to the varying seasons of the year.

348. So—*i.e.*, according to the changing season.

349. **Partrich**—partridge. **Muwe**—coop wherein fowls were fattened.

350. **Breem**—fish. **Luce**—pike (fish). **Stuwe**—fish-pond.

351. **Wo...cook**—(1) his cook was sad or grieved; (2) his cook would be in trouble. **But if**—unless.

352. **Poynaunt**—pungent, highly flavoured **Geere**—utensils.

353. **Table dormant**—fixed table. A table, formed by boards laid across trestles, was more common in Chaucer's days. It was called 'board', and it was removed after each meal.

354. **Covered**—prepared for a meal.

355. **Sessiouns**—sittings of law-courts.

356. **Knyght of the shire**—representative of the shire in Parliament.

357. **Anlaas**—a knife such as was carried by artisans. Those who did not wear sword, carried a knife for purposes of self defence. **Gipser**—purse. It was a fashion to wear a purse, suspended from the belt by a cord or chain. The fashion came in with the crusades.

359. **Shirreve**—sheriff. **Countour**—auditor.

360. **Vavasour**—sub-vassal next in dignity to a baron.

363. **Cloted lyveree**—there were members of one and the same guild, and they wore the same livery. The livery consisted of a gown or hood or both.

365. **Geere**—apparel. **Apiked**—trimmed.

366. **Chaped**—mounted.

368. **Everydeel**—every whit.

370. **Yeldehalle**—guildhall. **Deys**—the dais was at first the wooden floor at the upper end of the hall.

371. **For......kan**—for knowledge and experience he possessed.

372. **Shaply**—fit. **Alderman**—the head officer of the guild. He looked to the administration of the funds of the society. At the annual function he occupied the seat on the dais and presided over the proceedings.

373. **Catel**—property.

374–375. **And eek...............blame**—and also their wives cannot say no to this or certainly it would be wrong of them.

376. **It............madame**—A citizen's wife would be entitled to be called 'madam' when her husband had become an alderman.

377. **Vigilies**—meatings on the eve of a festival *N. B.* "It was the manner in time past, upon festival eves, called vigils, for parishioners to meet in their church-houses or church yards, and there to have a drinking—fit for the time. Here they used to end many quarrels betwixt neighbour and neighbour. Hither came the wives in comely manner, and they that were of the better sort had their mantles carried with them, as well for show, as to keep them from cold at table."

379. **For the nones**—for the occasion. Originally *for then anes*, for the nonce; where *then* is the dative of she definite article.

380. **Marybones**—marrow-bones.

381. **Poudre-marchant**—the name of a kind of spice. **Galyngale**—spice prepared from the root of the plant cypress.

382. **Wel......ale**—he could distinguish good ale from bad, London ale being the best.

384. **Mortreux**—thickened soups or pottages. Plural.

385. **But......it**—it was a great pity. **As ... me**—as it seemed to me.

386. **Mormal**—sore, gangrene.

387. **Blankmanegr**—compound of minced capon with cream, sugar and flour.

388. **Wonynge**—dwelling.

389. **For...........woot**—as far as I know. **Dertemouthe**—Dartmouth was an important seaport in Chaucer's days.

390. **Rouncy**—a hackney, nag.

391. **Faldyng**—a sort of coarse cloth.

396-397. **Ful many.........sleepe**—*i. e.*, he had drawn quantities of wine from the casks while the merchant slept during the voyage from Bordeaux **Chapman**—merchant. **Sleepe**—preterite singular. *N. B.* An annual journey was made to Bordeaux to fetch wine. The crew of the ship would purloin the wine, replacing it by water, if the merchant was not watchful.

398. **Nyce**—scrupulous. **Of nyce .....keepe**—he bothered little about tender conscience. **Keepe**—care.

399-400. **If that..............lond**—*i. e.*, if he fought and was victorious, he spared none of the prisoners he took, but drowned them. **By water.........hoom**—ironical for drowning them.

401. **Of his craft**—as regards knowledge of his craft.

402. **Stremes**—currents.

403. **Herberwe**—harbour. **Moone**—moon. **Lodemenage**—pilotage. The word means the hire of a pilot for conducting a ship from one place to another.

404. **Hulle**—Hull, a seaport in Yorkshire. **Cartage**—Carthage on the north coast of Africa

405. **Undertake**—undertake an expedition.

408. **Gootlond**—Gottland, island in the Baltic Sea.

Cape of Fynystere—Cape of Finistere on the north-west extremity of Spain.

412-413. **In all.........surgerye**—speaking of medicine and surgery there was none like him in the world.

414. **Astronomye**—*i. e.*, astrology.

415. **Kepte**—observed.

416. **In houres**—in astrological hours.

417-418. **Wel koude............pacient**—he would look out to the moment of the star in the ascendant and could use the image made at such a moment for the cure of the patient. The ascendant is the point of the zodiac which happens to be above the horizon at any given moment, either of birth or of sickness. The ascendant might contain a fortunate planet. The doctor would avail himself of such a moment for the cure of his patient.

420. **Were it......drye**—*N. B.* The four temperaments or humours are said to correspond to the four elements—earth, air, fire, water. The melancholy temperament is traced to the earth which is cold and dry; the sanguine temperament to the air which is hot and moist; the choleric temperament to fire which is hot and dry; the phlegmatic temperament to water which is cold and moist.

421. **Were.........humour**—*i. e.*, the element or humour which is the source of the disease.

422. **He...............praktisour**—he was a very perfect practitioner.

423-424. **The cause......boote**—the cause of the disease known and the root of the trouble traced, he would give the sick man the remedy at once.

425. **Apothecaries**—druggists.

426. **Letuaries**—remedies, a paste made by mixing a powder with honey or syrup. Lat. *electuarium*.

427. **For ech......wynne**—there was a sort of pact between the doctors and the apothecaries, each helping the other to make money.

428. **Hir........ bigynne**—their friendship was one of long standing.

429. **Wel.........Esculapius**—the names of physicians mentioned here were held in high esteem in the Middle Ages. **The olde**—*i. e.*, the celebrated.

430-434. **Deyscorides**—a physician of the 2nd century. **Rufus**—a physician of Ephesus, who lived about the time of Trojan. **Ypocras**—Hippocrates, born in 460 B. C. **Haly**—a famous Arabian astronomer and commentator on Galen. **Serapion and Avicenna**—Galen's contemporaries **Razis**—an Arabian physician of the 10th century who practised at Cordova. **Averroes**—of the 12th century, wrote a commentary on Aristotle's works. **Damascien**—an Arabian physician and theologian of the 9th century. **Constantyn**—Constantius. Afer, a monk of Cassino in Italy. **Bernard Gordon**—Professor of Medicine at Montpellier and Chaucer's contemporary. **John Gatesdon**—Fellow of Merton College and Professor of Physics at Oxford, fourteenth century. **Gilbertus Anglicus**—author of a popular compendium of the science of medicine, thirteenth century. These names have a topical interest. Most of the works of the Arabian authors were translated into Latin when Chaucer was living, and so we can understand that the doctor should have studied them.

435. **Mesurable**—temperate.

436. **For...........superfluitee**—there was nothing of excess in it.

437. **But...digestible**—but it was full of nourishment, and easy to digest.

438. **His studie.........Bible**—he seemed to have read little of the Bible.

439. **Sangwyn**—blood-red or scarlet. **Pers**—perse, dark blue.

440. **Sendal**—a kind of thin silk used for lining.

441. **But esy of dispence**—*i. e.*, sparing of money.

442. **He kepte..............pestilence**—he saved all the money that he made at the time of the plague.

443—444. **For gold.........special**—a satirical hit. He prescribed gold as medicine, and that was the reason that he loved gold especially. Gold as medicine can do

a lot of good for the heart; naturally, therefore, he could love gold (money).

445. **Of biside Bathe** — from the neighbourhood of Bath.

446. **That was scathe**—that was a pity.

447-448. **Of......Gaunt**—she had such skill in cloth-making that she surpassed those of Ypres and Ghent. *N. B.* Manufacture of cloth was know in the neighbourhood of Bath. Private cloth manufacturing was generally in the hands of women. Cloth was woven in all large households under the direct supervision of the mistress. **Haunt**—'to practise habitually (an action) or to frequent habitually (a place).'

450. **That........... goon**—she would not permit anybody to precede her in presenting an offering at Mass. She claimed the privilege of an alderman's wife. People go up to the altar to make an offering in an order, settled by their position and standing. The Wife of Bath would insist on the right of leading the way.

451. **If ther dide**—if anybody went before her to the altar. **Wrooth**—angry.

452. **That.........charitee**—that she forgot all Christian tolerance.

453. **Cover-chiefs**—the cover-chief had inside a framework of wire which kept it stiff and stretched, and was embroidered and trimmed with lace. Sometimes it was of great height and weight, and cost a good deal of money. **Ground**—the stuff which formed the foundation for the embroidery.

454. **Weyeden**—weighed.

457. **Moyste**—soft and pliant.

459. **She .... lyye**—*N. B.* There is a sarcastic touch here. Inspite of her shady life she was so self-assertive that she made herself esteemed and respected by her neighbours.

460. **Housbondes......fyve**—she had been married five times, and she had affairs too over and above—and so she must be a worthy woman!

461. **Withouten**—in addition to.

462. **But.........nowthe**—at present we need not refer to it. **Nowthe**—at present.

463. **At Jerusalem**—The Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem attracted the pilgrims. Of course the Wife of Bath travelled or visited the shrines from a motive of pleasure and not of devotion.

465. **At Boloigne**—at Bologne there was a wonderful image of the Virgin.

466. **In Galice......Coloigne**—there was the shrine of St. James, the Apostle in Galicia in Spain, and at Cologne there was the grave of the Three Kings of the East.

467. **She koude......weye**—she had much experience of travelling by the road.

468. **Gat tothed**—having the teeth for apart. "This was popularly regarded as a sign that the person would be a great traveller."

469. **Amblere**—a horse that goes at a smooth or easy pace.

470. **Y. wimpled**—provided with a wimple (a linen head-dress).

471. **Bokeler**—buckler (a small shield). **Targe**—target (shield).

472. **Foot mantel**—foot-cloth, 'safeguard', to cover the skirt.

473. **Spores**—spurs.

474. **Eelaweship**—company. **Carpe**—talk, discourse.

475-476. **Of remedies........daunce**—she was well experienced in the remedies of love ; she knew a trick or two of amatory art. **Remedies**—Ovid's *Remedia Amoris.* There might be a hint that she was acquainted with love-charms. **The olde dauuce**—the old game, the old way of love.

478. **Persoun of a toun**—a parish priest. *N.B.*—A contrast is suggested between the friar and the priest. The friar abuses his own position and is faithless to his vow of poverty. The parish priest represents the new order ; he faithfully discharges his duties to the people

under his care. He has been supposed to have been modelled upon Wyclif.

482. **Parisshens**—parishioners. Fr. *paroissiens.*

483 484. **Benygne......pacient**—he was gracious, and wonderfully active, and bore himself patiently in adversity.

485. **And .....sithes**—that he was so had been tested many a times. **Sithes**—times.

486. **Ful...............tithes**—he was very unwilling to curse (excommunicate) anybody for non-payment of tithes. Tithe was one-tenth of the yearly revenue from land or personal industry, paid to support the clergy and the church.

487-489. **But rather.........substaunce**—he gave to the poor folk what he got from his parishioners and from his own meagre income. **Out of doute**—unoubtedly. **offryng**—*i. e.*, alms given to him by his parishioners. **Substaunce**—property, what he got from his benefice.

490. **He koude.........suffisaunce**—he needed but little to satisfy him.

491. **Wyd...asonder**—his parish had a large area, and the houses which he visited were scattered far and wide.

492-595. **But he ne..............staf**—the parish priest scrupulously performed his office. In rain or thunder, in sickness or trouble, he did not miss visiting those living at the greatest distance in the parish, great or small, and he went on foot with a staff in hand.

496. **Ensample**—example. **His sheepe**—his parishioners.

497. **That......toughte**—the example he set was this: first he practised himself, and then he taught his parishioners what he practised.

499. **Figure**—figure of speech (simile).

500. **If gold......doo**—if gold takes rust, what about iron ? If the priest takes to evil ways, you connot blame the parishioners if they sin.

502. **Lewed man**—ignorant man. **Lewed**—is connected with Lat. *Laicatus*—belonging to the laity, parallel to late. Lat. *Clericatus.*

501-502. **For if............ruste**—if a priest is corrupt, there is no wonder that the ignorant people would go the wrong way.

503-504. **And shame............sheepe**—if a priest would note it is a disgrace that a priest should be foul while his parishioners are clean. **Take keepe**—heed or observe. **Shiten** – defiled.

507. **He.........hyer**—*N. B.* Many parish priests would lease out their livings either because of the dulness of country life or inadequacy of the stipend ; many would seek greater emoluments by running to London.

508. **And leet.........myre**—*i.e.*, leave his parishioners uncared for and drifting into heresy. The parishioners might live a wicked life, or drift into hresy, if the parish priest neglects them.

509.510. **And ran......soules**—A parish priest would sometimes go to London, and become a chantry priest. His duty was to say Mass daily for the soul of the founder of the chantry chapel. He had little else to do, and there was easy money.

511. **Or with.........withholde**—*i.e.*, he would withdraw from the world, and live a secluded life like a monk. Since he was not willing to serve the world, he would join a brotherhood and live a life of inactive ease. **To been withholde**—*i. e.*, to be kept away from the world.

512. **Kept............folde**—looked to the spiritual interests of his parishioners. **Folde**—sheepfold. The priest is the shephered, and the parishioners are his sheep.

513. **So that............myscarie**—the wolf is heresy (wrong teaching) which may invade the parishioners. **Myscarie**—go amiss. He dwelt at a home, and attended to the spiritual interests of his parishioners so that they might not be misled by false teaching.

514. **He.........mercenarie**—he was a priest, true to his function, and did not want to make money out of it. **Mercenarie**—one with the spirit of a hireling—one seeking emoluments.

515-518 **And though.........benygne**—though he was virtuous, he was not stern to the sinner, nor haughty or disdainful in speech, but he was wise and gracious in his teaching. **Dangerous**—haughty (the original idea of difficult or awkward to deal with). **Digne**—disdainful

519-520. **To drawen ...bisyenesse**—he made it his task to attract people of divine life by his honesty and integrity.

521-523. **But it ....nonys**—but if anybody happened to be obstinate, whatever his position, high or low, he would not spare him but snub him sharply for the time being. **Snybben**—snub.

525. **He......reverence** - he did not look for ceremony and reverence.

526. **Spiced conscience**—*i.e.*, barterable couscience a conscience that would let him be bribed.

527-528. **But cristes..... hymselve** -he preached what Christ and his twelve apostles had thought, but he practised it himself first. Example is better than precept.

529. **Plowman**—a small farmer, not a hired servant. The clerks came also from the agricultural classes. It was not unnatural that the ploughman was a brother of the parish priest.

530. **Y-lad** - carried. **Fother**—cart-load.

531. **Swynkere**—labourer.

534. **Thogh . smerte**—though it pleased or pained him (though things went well or ill with him). Impersonal use.

535. **And ......hymselve**—and then he loved his neighbour as himself, and this is Christian charity.

536. **Dyke**—make ditches. **Delve**—dig.

538. **Withouten hire**—gratis, without payment. **If it... ..myght**—as far as he could do ; to the best of his power.

539-540. **His tithes ....catel**—he paid his tithes regularly—both from what he produced by his personal labour as well as from his property. **Ful .... wel**—in full measure. **Propre** - personal **Catel**—property.

541. **Tabard**—a ploughman's loose frock. **A mere**—a mare was a poor mount.

545. **Carl**—rustic countryman.

546. **Brawn**—muscle.

547-548. **That......ram**—it was a proof of his strength that wherever he came, he carried away the prize at the wrestling match. **Ram**—the prize at a wrestling match.

549. **Knarre**—thickest fellow.

550-551. **Ther..... heed**—there was no door that he would not lift off its hinges, or break with his head at a running. **Harre**—hinge.

552-553. **His berd...........spade**—Note Chaucer's power of observation and sense of humour. His beard was as red as a sow or fox, and also broad as a spade.

554-556. **Upon ......erys**—right on the top of his nose stood a wart, and the wart had a tuft of hair as the bristles of a sows ears.

557. **Nosethirles**—nostrils. O. E. *nose*, nose; *thryel*, a perforation, orifice. Connected with *thrill*.

560. **A Janglere**—a story-teller, jester, babbler. **A goliardeys**—*N.B.* There is an imaginary character. Bishop Golias in the *Apocalypsis Goliae* of Walter Map. It seems to be a satire upon the vices of the monks. Here it means no more than a buffoon or a securrilous talker.

561. **And that ....harlotries**—*i. e.*, all the stories he told were wanton and wicked. **Harlotries**—ribald jests.

562. **Tollen**—take toll. He managed to secure for himself thrice the commission allowed on the corn he had ground. The toll consisted of corn collected on the toll-dish. He took more than what was due to him by law. He was a dishonest fellow.

563. **Thombe of good**—*N.B.* These is a proverb—"An honest miller has a thumb of gold" with of course an ironical sense. He constantly sampled corn from the process of which his thumb acquired peculiar shape. 'Of goid' is used figuratively here : in sampling corn he knew how to misappropriate corn. **Pardee**—by God. *Par dieu* (Fr.—a common oath).

556. **Baggepipe ....sowne**—*N.B.* A bagpipe was

a favourite instrument, and it was played to the wanton songs with which the pilgrims entertained themselves during their journey. **Sowne**—sound.

566. **Therwithal**—by playing a bagpipe. **He .... towne**—he conducted us out of the town with the music of the bagpipe.

567. **Maunciple**—an officer who purchased victuals for an inn or college. **Temple**—inn of court.

568. **Achatours** – caterers, those who bought provisions for a large household, especially the royal household.

569. **For.........**vitaille—*i.e.*, how to win money out of the proceeding of buying provisions.

570. **Took by taille**—bought on credit. *N.B.* When purchases were made on credit, they were notched on a pair of sticks, one being given to the purchaser and the other retained by the seller. Debts of this kind often lapsed for non payment.

571. **Algate**—always. **Wayted**—expected.

572. **Biforn**—in a good position.

571-72. **Algate.........staat**—always he looked to his profit in purchasing provisions, and he had always the advantage (he made a good bargain).

573-575. **Now is nat.........men**—does it not show the favour of God in this matter that an ignorant man, such as the manciple was, should get the better of his superiors in intelligence? **Wit**—intelligence. **Pace**—surpass. **Heepe**—multitude. **An...........men** *i.e.*, his masters.

577. **That...curious**—who were well versed in the law.

578. **Duszeyne** - dozen.

579. **Stywardes** —person paid to manage another's estate.

581. **To maken ....good**—to make the lord live by his own property.

582. **Dettelees**—debtless. **But...........wood**—unless he were mad.

583. **Scarsly**—frugally. **As hym ... ... desire**—as it may please him to wish.

585. **In any......happe**—in any matter that might arise.

586. **And yet........cappe—yet** the miller befooled them all. **Aller**—genitive plural of *all.*

588. **Shave as ny**—shaved as closely.

589. **Y-shorn**—clipped.

590. **Tope**—head. **Doked**—cropped. **Biforn**—in front.

593. **Wel......bynne**—he could well manage a granary.

594. **Ther............wynne**—there was no auditor who could get the better of him.

595-596 **Wel wiste......greyn**—*i.e*, he could estimate the yield of crops by the weather, whether it was drought or rain.

597. **Neet**—cattle.

600. **By his covenant**—according to the terms of his agreement. **Rekenyng**—account.

601. **Syn that**—because.

602. **Ther.........arrerage**—no one could prove him to be in arrears.

603-604. **Ther.........covyne**—there was no bailiff, nor shepherd, nor other farm-servant who did not know of his trickery and deceit. **Hyne**—farm-servant. **Covyne**—fraudulent action. Old French, *covin*, late Lat. *Convenium* an agreement with some loophole.

605. **Deeth**—*i.e.*, the Black Death (plague)

606. **Wonyng**—dwelling place.

607. **Y-shadowed**—shaded

608. **He.........purchace**—he could make a good bargain and purchase better than his lord.

609 **Ful.........pryvely**—he had provided himself well with goods privately.

610 **Subtilly**—craftily.

611. **To... .... good**—so that his lord would readily given and lend him of his own goods.

612. **And.........hood**—*i.e.* while his lord gave or lent him of his goods, the fellow would have thanks too from his lord and also a coat and hood. He could well dupe his lord.

613. **Myster**—trade or handicraft Lat. ***Ministerium.***

614 **Wrighte**—worker

615. **Stot**—nag.

616. **Pomely grey**—dapple-grey horse. **Highte**—called.

617. **Surcote**—upper coat.

621. **Tukked......aboute**—*i.e.,* he gathered up the gown under his girdle, as being rather long it would hinder him when he had to ride.

632. **Hyndreste**—hindmost ; last. **Route**—company.

623. **Somonour**—an officer who summoned offenders to ecclesiastical courts.

624. **Cherubynnes face**—the cherub has a red face.

625. **Sawcefleem**—covered with pimples (due to an excess of humour called *salsa phlegma*).

627. **Scaled**—scabby, scurfy. **Piled**—deprived of hair, very thin.

629. **Lytarge**—ointment prepared from protoxide of lead. **Brymstoom**—sulphur.

630. **Boras**—borax. **Ceruse**—white lead, used in ointments. **Oille of tartre**—cream of tartar. **Noon**—none.

631. **Byte**—burn.

632. **Whelkes**—pimples.

633. **Knobbes**—big pimples.

634. **Lekes**—leeks.

638. **Than......Latya**—then he would speak nothing but Latin.

639. **Termes**—legal terms, scraps of Law. Latin.

640. **Decree**—statute.

643. **Kan.........Watte**—can call Walter (can repeat a phrase by rote).

644-645. **But who-so.........philosphie**—but whosoever could test him in any other matter, all his wisdom would be then exhausted.

646. **Questio.........juris**—the question is how stands the law ?

647. **Harlot**—ribald, foul-tongued fellow.

649. **suffre**—allow.

651. **Excuse......fulle**—*i.e.*, having lent him his mistress, he would later excuse him for his use of her.

652. **And.........pulle**—privatly he could swindle an ignorant person.

653. **Owher**—anywhere.

655. **Ercedekenes curs**—the archdeacon's excommunication.

656. **But if......purs**—*i e.*, if he did not mind paying something to the priest. All that he would suffer was loss of money, and no risk to his soul. He could buy the safety of his soul with money when he was cursed by a priest.

657. **For......be**—the only punishment he could suffer in consequence of a priest's curse is loss of money, but his soul would remain uninjured. Pay money and the curse is nullified.

658. **Purs .....helle**—the archdeacon's curse means punishment in hell. To lose purse is equivalent to punishment in hell. That is how the summoner will put it. The archdeacon's curse can be bought off with money. Under the curse the soul is threatened with punishment. The summoner does not believe in any such punishment. When the archdeacon is given some money, the curse is recalled. It would be hell to a man not to give money to a priest if he valued money too highly. But if he did not mind paying, he could well defy the curse of an archdeacon.

660. **Of cursyng...drede**—each sinner ought to fear the curse of an archdeacon.

661. **For......savith**—for the soul would as surely perish under a curse as it would be saved by confession of sin and absolution. **Assoillyng**—absolution.

662. **War him**—*i e.*, beware. **Significavit**—a writ of excommunication.

663. **Daunger**—power, domination. From late Lat, *dominiarium*. **Gise**—manner.

664. **Diocise**—bishop's district.

665. **Knew hir counseil**—shared their confidence. **Reed**—adviser.

667. **Ale-stake**—a post projecting from an inn, from which a painted sign is usually suspended.

668. **Cake**—a round rather flat loaf of dread.

669. **Pardoner**—seller of indulgences. licensed by the Pope. These indulgences were remissions of sin, granted by the Pope for monetary payment.

670. **Rouncivale**—a hospital in London, near Charing Cross. **Compeer**—companion.

673. **Stif**—strong. **Burdoun**—accompaniment.

674. **Was never......soun**—a trumpet never made half so rancorous a sound as when he sang the accompaniment.

676. **Strike of flex**—hank of flax.

679. **Colpons**-shreds, bundles. **Oon and oon**—singly, one by one.

680. **For jolitee**—for comfort ; jolitee' has also been explained as vanity.

681. **Trussed**—packed.

682. **Al......jet**—all in the new fashion.

683. **Dischevelee**—with hair hanging down loosely.

684. **Glarynge**—staring, shining.

685. **Vernycle**—a copy of the sacred handkerchief on which the impression of the Saviours's face was distinguishable. It was a handkerchief which St. Veronica presented to Jesus as he passed by him on his way to be crucified.

687. **Bret-ful**—brimful.

692-693. **But of his craft......Ware**—in the business of selling pardons none could compete with him from Berwick to Ware. **Berwyk**—town of Northumberland. **Ware**—town of Hertfordshire.

694. **Male**—bag. **Pilwe-beer**—pillow-case.

695. **Lady veyl**—veil of the Virgin Mary. *Lady* is uninflicted genitive.

696. **Gobet of the seyl**—fragment of the sail.

698. **Hente**—took, Preterite.

6>9. **Latoun**—compound metal containing chiefly copper and zinc.

701-704. **But with......tweye**—by selling these relics (which were all fakes) to the poor folk in the country he made in one day more money than a parson earned in two months.

706. **He made............apes**—he made a parson and the people his dupes.

708. **He......ecclesiaste**—for all his dishonesty and swindling he was esteemed a good minister in church.

709 **Lessoun**—passage of the Bible.

710. **Alderbest**—best of all. **Offertorie**—part of service at which collection of money is made.

712. **Affile**—file *i. e.,* render smooth.
715. **In a clause**—briefly.
718 **Gentil**—comfortable, hospitable.
719. **Belle**—the sign of an inn.
721. **Baren us**—conducted ourselves. **like**—same.
722. **Alyght**—alighted. Curtailed past participle.
723. **After**—afterward. **Viage**—journey.

726. **Narette it nat**—impute it not, consider it not. **Vileynye**—(1) rudeness, discourtesy. (2) want of breeding.
728. **Cheere**—bearing.
729. **Speke.. proprely**—report their words exactly.
731. **After a man**—*i.e.,* reporting what a man said.
732. **Moote**—must. **As ny............kan**—as closely as he can.

733. **Charge**—care.
734. **Al**—though. **Large**—freely.
736. **Feyne thyng**—*i.e.,* invent.

730-736. **For this...........newe**—for you know this as well as I that whosoever shall tell a tale reporting the speech and bearing of a man, he must relate, as closely as ever he can, every word if it is his business to do so, no matter if he speaks rudely and freely otherwise he must tell his tale untruly or invent things or find new words. *N. B.* Chaucer claims to make an accurate report of the speeches and behaviour of the company of pilgrims with whom he is travelling. He defines his own method of narration and description—and it is pre eminently realistic.

737. **He may......brother**—*i.e.*, he must tell the truth even if it were his brother of whom he was speaking.

738. **He moot.........another**—*i. e.*, he must repeat a word as exactly as another; he must report everything accurately.

739. **Brode**—unreservedly, plainly.

740. **No vileynye is it**—there is nothing rude about it.

742. **'The wordes .....dede'**—words closely associated with the deed (words must correspond to the deed). It is Chaucer's plea for realism; words used by a poet must correspond to reality.

744. **Al......degree**—although or if he has failed in representing them in their position, *i. e.*, in the proper order of their position.

745 **As that .....stonde**—*i.e.*, in the position in which they should stand.

746. **My wit is short**—I do not claim high ability; I have but a poor intelligence.

747 **Great............everichon**—our host entertained everyone of us highly.

750. **Wel......leste**—it pleased us to drink heartily.

751 **Semely**—decent; suitable.

752. **Marchal in an halle**—a master of the ceremonies.

753. **Stepe**—bright.

754. **A fairer ....Chepe**—a finer burgess (citizen) there is none in Cheapside.

756. **And......naught**—he lacked nothing of manliness. *Lakkede* is an impersonal use.

760. **Maad our rekenynges**—paid our bills.

764. **Saugh**—saw.

765. **Herberwe**—inn.

766. **Fayn......how**—I would gladly make you merry if I knew how.

767. **Myrthe**—jest or joke. **Of........bythoght**—a joke has occurred to me.

769. **God you speede**—God cause you to prosper!

770. **Quite**—requite. **Meede**—reward. **This blisful...
......meede**—May the blessed martyr (Thomas a Becket) reward your pains.

772. **Ye.........pleye**—you prepare to tell stories and make merry.

775. **I......disport**—I will create diversion for you.

776. **Erst**—first.

777. **If...........alle**—if it pleases you all. *Liketh* is impersonal.

778. **Stonden......juggement** - abide by my decision.

779. **To werken...seye**—to do as I tell you.

782. **But......myrie**—unless you be merry.

783. **Hoold......hond**—hold-up your hands as a sign of agreement.

784. **Oure conseil ....seche**—our opinion was not long withheld.

785. **Us......wys**—seemed to us not worthwhile to take a long time over it. **To make it wys**—to make it a matter of prolonged deliberation.

786. **Avys**--deliberation.

791. **To shorte...weye**—*i. e.*, to relieve the tediousness of the journey.

795. **Of......bifalle**—of incidents that happened in the past. **Whilom**—formerly. Dative plural.

796. **Bereth......alle**—does the best in the matter.

728. **Sentence**—meaning.

805. **Withseye**—withstand.

807. **Vouche-sauf**—grant.

809. **Shape me**—devise.

810. **Oure......swore**—our oaths taken.

813. **Governour**—umpire.

817. **In heigh and lowe**—in all matters, great and small.

818. **Accorded**—agreed.

819. **Fet**—fetched.

822. **Amorwe**—in the morning.

823. **Was.........cok**—*i. e.*, waked up all of us just as a cock wakes the people in the morning by crowing.

825. **Pass**—walking pace, as compared to trotting.

826. **The wateryng of Seint Thomas**—the first stopping place of importance on the way to the shrine of Thomas a Becket was on the Kent Road where horses were watered.

827. **Areste**—stop.

829. **Foreward**—agreement.

830. **If even-song............accorde**—if there is no disagreement between what you promised last evening and your action this morning *i. e.*, if you keep your agreement of last evening).

831. **Lat see**—let us see.

833—834. **Whoso..... spent**—whosoever goes against my judgment, shall pay all the money which is spent on the journey.

835. **Draweth......cut**—draw lots. " The cut was either the deicisive bit drawn from a miscellaneous heap of sticks and straws, or else every bit in the heap. From the 13th ecntury onwards this was a favourite form of sortilege." **Ferrer**—farther. **Twynne**—part.

836. **Sorteste**—shortest tale.

838. **Accord**—agreement.

840. **Lat...shamefastnesse**—let alone your modesty.

841. **Ne Studieth noght**—do not deliberate. **Ley hond to**—begin.

842. **Drawen**—draw lots.

844. **Sort**—destiny. **Cas**—chance.

847. **As was resoun**—as it was reasonable.

848. **Composicioun**—contract.

850. **And......so**—when thc knight saw that it was his turn to tell the first story.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1. Characterize Chaucer's humour and illustrate from the *Prologue*.

Ans. There is nothing morbid about Chaucer's hamour. His humour is the expression of his joyous sense of existence. His own buoyant vitality, his manysided interest in life and its multiple manifestations, his faith in humanity give a unique quality to his humour. First, he is capable of remarkable detachment—he can survey the motley scene of life with an amused smile and a tolerant gaze. He is first of all a disinterested onlooker—and he can, therefore, paint things and persons as they are. His disinterested view of things is aided by his minute observation. The details he portrays with an eye to their pictorial and comical effects, produce the most striking impression upon the reader; the very essence of his subtle but delicious humour is contained in the presentation of characters. Chaucer has his own way of dealing with human characters, which marks an immense advance upon the romance-writers who gave us only shadowy abstractions, not living personages. Shakespeare has certainly a still subtler art in presenting human characters; but otherwise very few, either poets, dramatists, or novelists, have been able to improve upon Chaucer's method. His sense of humour is best exhibited in his pictures of living men and women. He is a master of humour; and he knows well that speech, action and movements of living men and women are the real range for humour, and so his first problem was to put on the stage living men and women of his own age for he knew them best.

Secondly, with his humour goes the lift of expression. His knowledge of the fluent tongue of France and his acquaintance with Italian too gave him unprecedented sources of expression. He easily commanded melody of verse, and ease and naturalness of expression. The reader enjoys his humour so much because Chaucer always gives an exquisite turn to the things and persons observed by

him; in the very way of presenting the lighter sides in human character, which may excite our laughter and dismiss worries of life, he reveals the inner personality of the man. In assessing his humour we have, therefore, to take into consideration his knowledge of human psychology, his minute observation of thing and persons his realism, and his humanism. His humour is not something isolated; it is a product of his own personality, and richly gifted as he is his humour has a compound effect His humanism, his tolerance of human frailties and weaknesses, for he is above all a realist and knows that to err is human, imparts all the deliciousness to his humour.

A few concrete illustrations will make the thing clear. The Prologue is wholly written in the spirit of humour, his humour has a pervasive quality And as it has been said above, it is in connection with human character and action and movement that he exhibits his humour best. We may take the character of the Monk. The details of the description bring him into life at once. But there are subtle touches that reveal his inner personality—and this is done with a delicate sense of humour, and there is nowhere any hint of censure or condemnation. The Monk would have nothing to do with the rule of St Maure or St. Benet. He seems to have discovered a new value in this earthly life which has been decried and discredited in the Middle Ages. He must make the most of this life :

> This like monk leet olde thynges pace,
> And heeld after the newe world the space.

St. Augustine recommends manual labour to monks. He is certainly wiser than St. Augustine. Let St. Augustine keep manual labour for himself. He knows better ; he has a real zest for life :

> Of prikyng and of hunting for the hare
> Was al his lust'...................................

His betters do the same thing. Why should he not? That is the way to enjoy life.

For broad effects of humour we may note the physical features of the monk as described by Chaucer :

He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;
His eyen stepe and rollynge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed.

He had a bloated appearance, and it is all the effect of self-indulgence. Perhaps the new spirit, namely, making the most of this life as contrasted with the otherworldiness of the Middle Ages, is best expressed in the Franklin:

To lyven in delit was ever his wone,
For he was Epicurus owene sone.

The Franklin identifies happiness with the pursuit of sensual pleasure. The Friar is little short of a knave. But Chaucer's portrayal of him does not produce any repulsion in the reader. He touches the character with his inimitable humour and gracious indulgence. His humour expresses the essence of humanism. The Friar dealt very gently with the penitents

Men moot yeve silver to the poure freres

and then all his sins are remitted and he can dispense with 'wepynge and preyeres.'

The Summoner preaches the same philosophy. One need not fear the Archdeacon's curse. It can be brought off. One can suffer in his purse; that is all, "purs is the Ercedekenes helle." The Wife of Bath is a masterly creation. What we ought to note is that Chaucer makes none of these characters repulsive. After all they are human creatures, it is their weakness and frailities that make them what they are and what they cannot be otherwise. Chaucer has Shakespeare's large-hearted tolerance, and that makes his humour so uniquely delectable.

Q. 2. Write a note on Chaucer's Humour and Satire.

Or

" It is safe to say that a great deal of the combination of vivacity in Chaucer's portraits and sketches of all kinds is due to this all pervading humour; indeed, it is not very likely that any would deny this." (Saintsbury) Discuss.

Q. 3. The *Prologue* is a national portrait-gallery of the fourteenth century. Discuss.

Ans. There is much of medieval atmosphere and

colour in the *Prologue.* It may be read as a picture of medieval society. But that is not the whole truth about it. Chaucer is a poet of profound insight and far reaching vision. He is also the pioneer of the Renaissance in England. He discerned the break-up of medieval society. The *Prologue* has an interest to the modern reader far transcending the age to which it belongs The *Prologue* has its supreme interest to-day because it is the picture of a vanishing age for which a class of readers might have a pathetic yearning and also because it reveals the coming age. The wide-spread corruption of the medieval church (which Chaucer portrays in the *Prologue*, has a significance apart from the rottenness of the church itself. It means a revolt against the spirit of the Middle Ages. Chaucer has a tolerant spirit and extraordinary faith in humanity, and so he can portray the realities of the age with an unperturbed spirit (and we can contrast him here with Langland). The Monk makes this earthly life his chief objective ; the Friar discards the vow of poverty ; the Franklin identifies happiness with the pursuit of sensual pleasure. This is all significant. The spirit of otherworldiness which characterized and distinguished the Middle Ages has now lost its attraction. This is the new spirit, reflected in the *Prologue.* It marks the advent of the modern age. The shifting of interest from the world to come to the life on this earth owes its emphasis to the Renaissance—the revival of the study of Greek and Latin. The discovery of a value in earthly life is the gift of the Renaissance.

In the *Prologue* we have the picture of medieval society, but it is in the stage of disintegration. There are the Knight and the Squire, and they represent the old tradition of chivalry. The days of chivalry are now almost gone. This was well demonstrated in the battles of Crecy and Poitiers. The ecclesiastical figures, painted by Chaucer and appearing in the *Prologue* give a picture of the decadence of the medieval church. Wyclif denounced the abuses and corruptions of the church. The Friar, the Monk, the Pardonerall bear testimony to it. Chaucer may have a satirical purpose, but it cannot be denied that he is portraying the realities of the time. We need not forget that there are the parish

priest and the Oxford scholar. They are also as typical of the age as the friar, monk and pardoner. It needs all sorts to make the world. There are both good and bad elements in every society. Chaucer is a realist and disinterested observer, and it is his business to give a true picture of the society with which he was so intimately acquainted.

There are other figures—a Shipman—a blend of merchant, sailor and pirate, quite typical of the age, for such sea-dogs were soon to make England's name a terror on the seas , the Merchant who is coming into importance in the new society; a number of guild-memhers in their livery, very typical of the Middle Ages, the merchant and the guild memhers significantly pointing to the future rise of England as a commercial power. In the *Prologue* Chaucer represents all the classes of medieval society except the highest aristocracy and the lowest order of villains or serfs. With his creative genius Chaucer puts life, colour and movement into these medieval figures, and they at once become living men and women. They are as real to us as the men and women of to-day; they have the real human stuff in them. "As one after another of that immortal procession passes by, the intervening centuries are forgotten, and we ourselves seem fourteenth century pilgrims riding with the rest." This is the achievement of Chaucer's art and genius.

Q 4. Write a note on Chaucer's are of Characterisation Discuss and illustrate the artistic method adopted by Chaucer in the portrayal of his pilgrims.

Or

Show that Chaucer's pilgrims are at once types and individurls, true of their own age and representatives of humanity in general.

Or

" Chaucer has made his group of pilgrims into a picture of his time, the like of which is not to be found elsewhere." Discuss

Q. 5. What is your estimate of Chaucer's Realism ?

Ans. Chaucer's realism is something different from

the type of realism which is rampant to-day. There is dirt and squalor in every age, and it is rightly demanded that they cannot be left out from a true picture of society. But there is a fundamental difference. It is the way that the ugly facts of life are treated. There is a perverted sense of realism to-day. It seems to be an obsession with the ugly facts of life, and there is little evidence of what we call art. Artistic delicacy and *finesse* have been sacrificed to so-called realism or naturalism as it is sometimes called. If anything, it is class realism, and it is all the worse for art. Chaucer describes the ugly things about the medieval church, about the Miller, the Manciple, the Reeve, about the Wife of Bath, but there is an artistic grace about it. To make the ugly things appear more ugly and detestable—that is not the aim of Chaucer. Nor does he think that the ugly things of life mean all that life is. Chaucer makes allowances for human errors and frailties. Art cannot renounce its true function when it has got to deal with the dirt and squalor of life. Chaucer works from such a conviction. He has not debased art, and all that he paints of evil in life has an artistic value and also the value of sober truth. For the sake of art he does not falsify things And it is a realism different from the class realism of to-day. Chaucer has kept his eyes open for all that is decent and human in life, and has not concentrated on all that is ugly and squalid in painting a picture. It is a picture with an evenly distributed light and shade. Just as we have the Monk, the Friar and the Pardoner on the one side, there are, on the other, the Parish Priest and the Oxford Scholar ; just as we have the Wife of Bath, so we have the Prioress. Chaucer is going to picture to us the realities of life in his own way. He observes things as they are and looks beneath the surface. and apprehends the real significance of the phenomena that catch his eye ; and then with his delicate artistic sense and his untivalled gift of expression and genial humour describes them. So realism means for Chaucer a faithful representation of the realities of life with a due measure of their artistic evaluation ; necessarily he avoids over-emphasis. Artistic balance or proportion has secured to him the best type and, therefore, the genuine type of realism. Realism

cannot be divorced from art ; nor art can be divorced from the realities of life. True realism, of which Chaucer is the best example, means then the representation of the realities of life by means of art.

It is interesting to note that Chaucer holds a plea for realism and defines it in the *Prologue*. He is going to sell the story about the pilgrims on their way to the shrine of Thomas a Becket. He explains to us his method in lines 726–736. The truthful portrayal of the speech and conduct of every person whom he brings before us is the important element in his conception of the artistic rendering of the realities of life.

Whose shal telle a tale after a man,
He moote reherce, as ny as ever he kan,
Everich a word, if it be in his charge.

He insists on truth and accuracy in description of things and persons. Then again to describe things and persons in their truth and reality we have to depend on art, *i. e.*, the resources language, the power of narration, delicacy of perception, sense of proportion and balance, insight and observation. Realism means all this to Chaucer. Then Chaucer was the first to create living human characters in English literature. That is again a part of realism. The men and women of the *Prologue* are as real to-day as they were in Chaucer's day. We look in vain for the real men and women of the Middle Ages in the historical sketches of the time. Chaucer possessed the true creative art, and his realism is the outcome of it. He is a master of the narrative art, and he is a master of the realistic art.

Q. 6. Trace the influence of the Renaissance on Chaucer.

Ans **See Detailed Study of Chaucer (*Introduction*).**

Q. 7. Sketch the character of the Friar or the Wife of Bath.

Ans. See Paraphrase.

The Friar bears witness to the worldliness and corruption growing up among the clergy. He is wanton and merry, and given to gossip and slander—he has in fact a lewd

tongue. Yet he was esteemed as a worthy representative of his order. He was popular with the franklins and the respectable women of the town. He was licensed to hear confessions. Here his laxity is very evident. He would easily let off the penitent. Contrition and amendment were demanded of a sinner when he confessed his sin to a priest. With the Friar it was a different matter. Let the sinner give silver to the poor friars, and his sins were remitted at once. He used to teach the sinner this, and gave them free latitude. A friar was vowed to poverty. But our Friar led a merry and jovial life, paying little heed to religious concerns. He could better sing and make merry than mind religious matters. He was a tavern haunter, and was better acquainted with every inn-keeper and bar-maid than with a leper or a beggar woman. It was not decent for him to have anything to do with the poor people. He would cultivate the rich people and the sellers of provisions. He was to be found wherever there was a chance of making profit. He was attracted to things of the world rather than to the things of the spirit as a friar should have been. Greed is the worst vice in a man who is apparently devoted to the spiritual intrests of life. "His purchas was wel bettre than his rente" (*Line 256*). He was very grabbing—he would not spare a poor widow if he read the opening verses of St. John's Gospel to her. He was in his best form on love-days. He moved about like a master or pope, and least looked like a shabbily clothed friar. Chaucer portrays the Friar as he found him to be in his day. He does not evidently want to make a satire of the Friar. There is the new spirit in the air, and that spirit is to make the most of this mundane life. This spirit has infected the Friar who was originally vowed to a life of poverty.

We may take also the Wife of Bath who is Chaucer's masterly creation. She seems to be quite a respectable woman in society. She has her own excellence too—she surpasses the cloth-makers of Ypres and Ghent. It is no discredit to her. In those days the woman of large households used to weave cloth at home. She claimed the privilege of an alderman's wife—she would be the first to go up to the alter to make an offering. Other women of the

parish had to yield to her demand. She dressed fashionably and wore a heavy and finely embroidered kerchief. She had been a worthy woman all her life. Her chief distinction was this: "'Housbondes at Chirche dore the hadde fyve", not to speak of affairs with other people in her youth. She had been a wide traveller' she had visited important shrines at home, Bologne. Galicia, and Cologne. She had been to Jerusalem too. There is no evidence to show that these journeys were undertaken from a religious motive. She knew a trick or two of amatory art:

> Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,
> For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

The point is that Chaucer presents his characters as he finds them in actual life in a strict spirit of neutrality—that he does not presume to judge them It is left to the readers to draw their own conclusion. It is equally noteworthy that none of these characters, whatever their vices or short-comings, appear to be loathsome or repulsive. Chaucer recognizes the fundamental human attributes in each character—and they are the saving grace.

Q. 8. Write a short essay on the ecclesiastical figures in the Prologue. (Agra University 1958).

Q. 9. Paraphrase or modernize the following passages :

(*i*) Lines 64—66. Annatate—**ilke, somtyme, agayn, sovereyn, prys.**

(*ii*) Lines 139—150. Annotate—**peyned, hire, cheere, digne, conscience, of smale houndes, wastel, breed, wepte.**

(*iii*) Lines 184—188. Annotate—**wood, poure, swyn ken, bit, Austyn.**

(*iv*) Lines 252–256. Annotate—**sho, In principio, purchas, rente.**

(*v*) Lines 276—282. Annotate—**sheeldes, bisette, wiste, chevyssaunce.**

(*vi*) Lines 304—308. Annotate—**in forme, hy sentence, sownynge.**

(*vii*) Lines 318—326. Annotate—**fee symple, infect in terms, doomes, endite, make a thyng.**

(*viii*) Lines 336—340. Annotate—**Epicurus Seint Juliam.**

(*ix*) Lines 376—378. Annotate—**y-cleped, vigilies, y-bore.**

(*x*) Lines 398—400. Annotate—**nyce, keepe, hadde, the hyer hond, sente hem hoom.**

(*xi*) Lines 417—428. Annotate—**ascendent, of hoot, or cold, or moyste or drye, letuaries.**

(*zii*) Lines 485—490. Annotate—**sithes, looth, were hym, offryng, substaunce.**

(*xiii*) Lines 507—513. Annotate—**Seint Poules, chaunterie, to been withholde, myscarie.**

(*xiv*) Lines 560—563. Annotate—**janglere, goliardeys, thombe of gold.**

(*xv*) Lines 573—586. Annotate—**lewvd, pace, curious, propre, wood, sette hir aller cappe.**

(*xvi*) Lines 664—648. Annotate—**grope, questio quid juris, harlot.**

(*xvii*) Lines 662—665. Annotate—**war him, significavit, daunger, gise, knew, hir conseil, reed.**

(*xviii*) Lines 701—706. Annotate—**person, japes, mode... ......apes.**

(*xix*) Lines 741—746. Annotate—**eek, moote, nat.**

(*xx*) Lines 784—787. Annotate—**to make it wys, avys, verdit, hym, leste.**

(*xxi*) Lines 822—826. Annotate—**aller, cok, paas, wateryng of Seint Thomas.**

(*xxii*) Lines 845—849. Annotate—**sothe, cut, fil, as was resound, foreward, composicioun.**

Ans. See Notes.

Q. 10. " Chaucer is the earliest of the great moderns "

(Albert). Discuss.

Or

Why is Chaucer regarded the father of English poetry? What solid contributions did he make to English poetry, drama and novel?

Q. 11. "Chaucer stands in much the same relation to the life of his time as Pope does to the earlier phases of the XVIII century and Tennyson to the Victorian Era." Discuss.

Or

Write a note on Chaucer's Qealism.

Or

Discuss the Prologue as a picture of contemporary society.

APPENDIX

(For Hints and Answers, refer to Introduction and Section on Questions and Answers).

1. "The Prologue is a picture-gallery, the finest specimen we have in English Literature of the Literature of Characters." Discuss.

2. 'Chaucer found his native tongue a dialect and left it a language' *(Agra University, 1953).*

3. Spenser says that Chaucer is the "well of English undefiled." How far is this true?

4. Dryden calls Chaucer "a perpetual fountain of good sense." Illustrate.

5. "Chaucer was the first great poet who really loved outward nature as the source of conscious pleasurable emotion." Substantiate from the *Prologue.*

6. In Chaucer "we see the first result of the Norman year upon the home-backed Saxon Loaf." Explain.

7. "Even when Chaucer paints a type he gives the impression that he is painting some one person whom he happens to have met." Discuss.
(Agra University, 1953)

8. "Though Chaucer is in some respects the most English of 'English poets,' his writings are all strongly influenced by foreign literature." Discuss and illustrate.
(Agra University, 1952)

9. In the *Prologue* to *Conterbury Tales,* "we have the existing aspects and classes of English society described with a broad and impartial hand." Elucidate.

10. " He re is god's plenty "—Dryden says of the *Prologue.* Justify the remark.

11. " England has never had a story-teller comparable with Chaucer in his power of visualising all sorts and conditions of men and putting them on canvas for us in half-a-dozen strokes. Justify.

12. " Chaucer is so far in the company of Shakespeare, that he too presents character and human sense impartially, and in a way that we can trust." Comment on the above.

13. " Chaucer sees what is and paints it as he sees it. He effaces himself in order to look at it better." Discuss.

(Agra University, 1952).

14. " The succession of characters in Chaucer's *Prologue* is an epitome of the age." Discuss.

(Agra University, 1952).

15. " The characteristics of the various pilgrims are set down in masterly fashion by one of the shrewdest observes who ever took pen in hand." Discuss.

Most Important Explanations

FROM

Chaucer's Prologue

(1) Ful worthy was he............................

......................his worthynesse. (Lines 47-50)

(Agra University, 1957).

Modern English : He Knight was very valiant in his lord's war, and had compaigned, no man farther, both in Christendom and in heathen lands, and was ever honoured for his bravery.

Explanation—Chaucer describes the Knight first in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales most probably because he considers him the most distinguished of the company or perhaps, because he admired the Knight's Tale more than the other tales of the series and wished to place it at the head of his collection. This Knight, may be Jean, Seigneur de Roubais (a French Knight) who died in 1449, was an accomplished man and was full of truth, honour, freedom and courtesy. He was valiant and brave. He had like many other knights of that age, served, when his own country was at peace, under several foreign princes as a volunteer or free lance. He had participated in the war of his feudal superior, ultimately or immediately. Edward III. (Some of the old commentators took his Lord to refer to Christ). He had compaigned against the non-believers in Christianity (*i. e.*, the Muslims & the Moors in the 14th century) and had fought against them in far off lands. He was undoubtedly, a worthy man, with all the virtues of a true knight and was rightly regarded to be the ideal of moral excellence, 'a verray parfit, gentle knight.'

(2) *Embrouded was he................*

.........................fader at the table (Lines 89-100)

(*Agra Univ. 1949 ; 1952 ; Punjab Univ. 1954*).

Modern English : His clothes were embroidered red

and white, as it were a meadow full of fresh flowers. All the day long he was singing or playing upon his flute, he was as fresh as the month of May. H s coat was short with long. wide sleeves. Well could he sit on a horse and ride. He knew how to make songs, compose, joust and dance, draw and write. He loved so ardently that at night time he slept no more than a nightingale. He was courteous, modest and helpful and carved before his father at table.

Explanation—Chaucer in these lines his typical descriptive power. The peculiarities of the Squire's dress, his means of entertainment and pleasure, and his manners are described with a masterly hand. The clothes of the Squire were parti-coloured. They were red and white, sweet and smooth like the fresh flowers in a meadow. His coat was short with long wide sleeves that was so very common in Chaucer's days. He was all the day singing and playing on the flute. He was as fresh as the month of May and as lively as the spring. Besides he was a man of many points. He was a good rider and could sit gracefully on the horse. He was a poet too and could make and compose songs. He could fight in a tournament. He cenlp dance and draw and paint and write. He was a lover also. He loved so frevently and ardently that he slept no more at night than a nightingale. He had all the accomplishments associated with a gentleman in the Middle Ages. He was courteous, humble and serviceable. Carving the meat at the table and attending upon the guests of honour were two of the main duties of the Squire. The former in particular, was looked upon as a gentleman's accomplishment.

Note—(1) According to Sandras, the description of the Squire's dress is taken from the dress of the Dieu d' Amours in the *Roman de la Rose*. In the Ellesmere manuscript he wears a green gown sprinkled all over with white and red flowers.

(2) **By nyghtertale**—This is a description of the conventional practice of love making, cultivated by the aristocratic lovers of Chaucer's day in imitation of the French.

(3) **Curteis**—Denotes that he was expert in the manners and etiquette of court.

(4) **And carf**—It was one of the principal duties of the Squire to carve for the company.

(3) *A sheaf of pecok*..............................

........................*he al the usage.* (Lines 104-110)

(*Agra University, 1933*).

Modern English : Under his belt he bore very carefully a sheef of peacock arrows, bright and sharp ; he knew how to arrange his gear like a yeoman ; his arrows flew aslant with trailing feathers ; in his hand he carried a mighty bow. His head was cropped, and his visage brown. He understood well all the practice of woodcraft.

Explanation : Chaucer describes his Yeoman as carrying not only a bow, a sword and a buckler, which he could do on military service, but also a hunting horn, and guesses that he was a Forester. He had, therefore, plainly not been abroad with the Knight and we may imagine that the Squire and Yeoman had ridden from some country place to meet the Knight and attend him on the pilgrimage which he was making before returning home.

This Yeoman who was an attendant above the rank of a menial servant, was the servant of Chaucer's 'verray parfit gentil knyght.' He wore a coat and a hood of green His arrows were not plummed with goose feathers which were generally mentioned as the best ; they were winged with peacock feathers and he, as the babit was, carried them in the belt. He knew well how to set in order or make straight his arrows and bow. His arrows were not trimmed with 'high' feathers but with feathers 'low.' They were light and swift and did not droop in their flight. His bow was long and not the 'cross bow' which was used for the chase. Like all other yeoman who had won the battles of Crecy and Poitiers, he too was very much skilled in bowmanship. Besides all this, his head was closely cropped and shaven and he had a brown face.

(*4*) *Ful weel she soong.........................*

.... in her sauce depe. (Lines 122-129).

(*Agra Univ: 1931 ; 1936 ; 1954 B. H. U. 1958*).

Modern English: Well she sang the divine service beautifully intoned through her nose. And French she spoke properly well after manner of Stratford-le-Bow for Parisian French was unfamiliar to her. She was also taught well the art of eating, she let no morsel fall from her lips, nor did she wet her fingers deeply in the sauce.

Explanation—Chaucer's pen picture of the Prioress has a very gentle satire. He suggests that there was some little affectation both in his Proiress's religion and in her fine manners. She was called Madame Eglantine and was the head of a convent which was not devoted entirely to religious training, but also served as finishing school for the daughters of the rich and well-to-do.

Medam Eglantine sang Matins, Lands, Prime, Tierce, Sext, Nones, Vespers, Compline very well. Her singing was usually nasal. Chaucer is here simply stating a fact, not in itself ludicrous. He gives it, however, a ludicrous turn by mischievously adding 'ful semely.'

The Prioress spoke the French she had been taught as the Benedictine Nunnery at Stratford, which differed from 'French of Paris' because it was the French that had developed in England from the Norman French spoken by the Norman invaders. Her French was not so elegant as that of Paris.

The Prioress had good table manners too. Never a morsel dropped from her lips nor did ever her fingers wet in the sauce.

Note—(*i*) The manners of the Prioress are described in accordance with the manners of the day. The passage in an almost literal translations from *Roman de la Rose* (Line 14178—14199).

(*ii*) Madam Eglantine certainly represents a medieval type. But she is so vividly individualized in this beautiful portrait that one can hardly doubt Chaucer had a particular young lady in mind in describing her,

(5) *But for to speken........................*

.....................were deed or bledde. (Lines 142—145).

(*Calcutta University, 1957*).

Modern English—But, to speak of her sensibility, she was so charitable and compassionate that she would weep if she saw a mouse caught in trap, if it were dead or bleeding.

Explanation—Chaucer has not only portrayed the affectation of the Prioress in matters of religion and table manners but also in sensibility and feeling. She was so tender of her heart, so sympathetic and compassionate that she would weep if she saw a mouse, caught in a trap, dead or bleeding.

Note—Sensibility was a mark of good-breeding in Chaucer's day. The Prioress's sensibility might have suggested touches to the author of the *Mannof Feeling* or to Jane Austen.

Chaucer's Prioress took particular care to be courtly in her bearing and dignified in her manners.

(6) *The reule of Seint........................*

... .*newe world the space.* (Lines 173—176).

(*Agra University, 1928, Calcutta University, 1950*).

Modern English—The rule of St. Maure or of St. Benedict being old and somewhat austere, this monk let old things pass, and held his course after the new world.

Chaucer paints the picture of monk. The monk was an official in the monastery with the duties of a modern steward or bailiff He was a manly man who might have been an efficient and brilliant abbot. His stable had some beautiful choice horses. When he rode his bridle jingled in the whistling wind as clear and also as loud, as does the chapel bell, in the place where as if this lord were the prior of the monastery. "At the call where this lord was the superior the rules of St. Benredict and St. Maure were observed ; but since these rules were old and somewhat strict, he let them be regarded as obsolete and followed the newer fashions."

Note—In the Middle Ages there were four religious orders—the Augustinian, the Basilian, the Benedictine and the Franciscan. St. Benet of Benedictus was the founder of the Benedictine order of monks. He died about 542. His pupil St. Maure established the rule of St. Benedict in France. It was probably not observed in England until the latter half of the 7th century under the rule of Wilfrid, and St. Dunstan is responsible for insistence upon the rigid observance of all its precepts.

"The monk ignored the rule of St. Benet and St. Maure as being out of date. His aim was to keep up with the times."

(7) *He yaf nat of that........................*

........................out of his cloystre. (Lines 177—181).

(*Agra University 1956*).

Modern English—He gave not a plucked hen for that text which says that hunters are not holy men, or that a monk, when he is cloisterless (that is to say, a monk out of his cloister) is like a fish that is out of water.

Fxplanation—Chaucer portrays the picture of a Monk and tells us that he was a successful outrider and a hunter. He ignored the rule of St. Benet or St. Maure and let it pass as something old and outworn. He followed the fashion of the times. He did not care for the 'text' taken from a Decretal of Gratian "Sicut piscis sine aqua caret vita it a sine monasterio monachus" The Seriptures do say that a a monk cannot live out of his cloister without falling into deadly sins, any more than a fish can live out of water without dying. But the monk thought that this text was as valueless and negligible as a hen that had lost its feathers; Perhaps he was little interested in monastic life.

Note (*i*) Chaucer perhaps refers to the text from St. Jerome's Commentary on the Psalms—"Esau was a hunter, therefore he was a sinner, and indeed we do not find in the Holy Scriptures a single pious hunter."

(*ii*) There is a difference of opinion about teh readig

"Cloysterles" Some suggest "reccheless" meaning "careless." Tyrwhitt proposed to read "reghelles—without rule" but our reading is supported by a comparison with the parallel passage in the Mirour del' Omme (Lines 20845—208ↄ1).

(8) *What sholde be studie and......*

cost wolde he spare. (Line 184—192).

(*Punjab University 1954*).

(*Agra Univ. 1966*).

Modern English—Why should he study, and make himself mad, always pouring into a book in his cloister or toil with his hands, and labour, as St. Augustine bids? How may the world be served? Let Augustine have his labour reserved to him. He was therefore rightly a hard rider; he had greyhounds as swift as fowls in flight: all his pleasure was in hard riding, and hunting the hare, for which he would spare no expenses.

Explanation—In Chaucer's description of a Monk we still have a representative in the fox-hunting country parson, a Monk proud of his horsemanship and his hounds; richly attired and fond of good living rather than of study, certain, as Chaucer slyly hints, of early promotion to an abbacy, just one of those luxurious idle monks who roused the indignant denunciation of Wyclif.

The Monk, as Chaucer points out, showed his disregard of the traditions of his order. He would study but little and would not bother much about the dictum of St. Augustine who would impose the duty of manual labour in his Regulation Seconda. He doubted whether by a life of the utmost strictness and simplicity, the world could be served. Therefore he preferred to be a hard rider and justified it by saping that "Monks and priests had originally been permitted to hunt where game increased to such an extent as to damage the crops." This was always the case where the people were forbidden to destroy any game, hence the monks were never at a loss to justify their favourite amusement. He had greyhounds as swift as a bird in flight, and

was very fond of the hunting of the hare for which he would spare no pains and money.

Note—Chaucer has presented to us humour and sarcasm mixed together. The hobby of the Monk is described sarcastically.

Austin—St. Augustine of Hippo. He did not draw up a rule of monastic life. The one attributed to him was deduced from two of his letters. The duty of Manual abour is part of the so called Regula Seconda, contained in the second letter.

" Operentur a mane usque ad sextam, et a sexta usque ad nonam vacent lectione."

(9) *And for to festne his..............*

..............forneys of a leed. (Lines 195—202).

Modern English—And, to fasten his hood under his chin he had a wonderful pin wrought of gold ; at the larger end here was a love knot. His head was balb which shone like a glass ; and so did his face, as if it had been anointed. He was a fat lord and in good condition ; his eyes were bright and rolled in his head, and shone like the fire under a cauldron.

Explanation—Chaucer has presented to us a Monk who ignored the rule of St. Benet or St. Maure and bothered very little about the doctrine of St. Augustine. He was a carefree luxurious idle monk who was very much interested in hunting and justified his hobby by quoting the text. He was undoubtedly one of those monks who roused the Wyclifian criticism and condemnation.

His dress and face too told of luxury and joy. He had a gold pin to fasten his hood under his chin. At the larger end there was a twisted loop *i. e.*, a love-knot. He was bald. His head shone as glass and his face was anointed. He was fat and healthy and rich. His eyes were bright and shining like the stars and glowed as the furnace of lead.

This humorous description of the Monk's dress, head, face, eyes and belly add to the picturesque portrayal of his

character. Chaucer points the minute details and lets us smile at the colour and outlines of the picture.

(10) *For though a waydwe......... ....*

....................bettre than h's rente. (Lines 253—256).

(*Agra University, 1929*).

Modern English—For though a widow had not so much as a shoe so pleısant was his 'In Principio' that he would have his farthing before he parted. His proceeds from his begging were greater than his regular income.

Explanation—After having described the Monk, Chaucer talks of a Friar who under the cloke of mendicancy covers a deep-rooted love of money and selfish indulgence, being 'the beste beggere in his hous', who knew the tavernes well in every town, and by his power of confession and absolution exterted unbounded influence over women old and young. So pleasant was his reading of the opening verses of the Gospel of St. John to which a magical value was attached, that even the poorest woman had to part away with the least she had and the Friar always got a gift. Thus the proceeds of his begging were much greater than the rent he paid to his convent. He made a considerable profit for himself.

Note. (*i*) **In Principio**—The opening words of St. John's Gospel; of Jacke Upland, Wrights Pol. Poems and Songs:

"For ye win more by yeare with In Principio, than with all the rules that ever your patrones made."

(*ii*) **His purchas rente:** Taken from the *Roman de le Rose* (Line 1/760) ' Miex vault mes pourchas que ma rente.'

English Version. To wynnen is alwey myn entent
My purchace is bettir than my rent.

11. *And rage he koude............................*

..........................maister or a pope. (Line 257—261).

(*Calcutta University 1951*).

Modern English—He would play about wantonly as if he were a puppy dog. He could be very helpful during days of arbitration, for on such occasions he was not a recluse with a threadbare cloak as is a poor scholar, but like a master or a Pope.

Explanation—Chaucer has nicely drawn an odious and contemptible figure of the Friar whose cloke of mendicancy covers a deep rooted love of money and selfish indulgence. The Frair by his power of confession and absolution exerted unbounded influence over women old and young. He was a greater hypocrite than Chaucer's Pardoner or seller of indulgences.

This Friar was as wanton as a cub. He could help much on love-days. He was an asset to the persons on the days appointed for the settlement of disputes by arbitration. At that time he did not think that he was an inmate of the cloister, with an outworn cope as a poor scholar is but he considered himself in authority and took himself to be no less than a Pope. He felt as if he was the recipient of the Degree of Master or Doctor which not only required a long course of study but also a lavish expense in feasting and presents. This made those, and also the Friar who could afford to take in rank as very dignified persons indeed.

(*12*) *His reasons he spak*............................

............................*sheeldes sell*. (Lines 274—278).

(*Agra University 1930, 1935, Cal. Univ. 1955*).

Modern English—His opinions he uttered very pompously, ever tending to the increase of his profits. He desired that at any cost the sea between Middleburg and Orwell should be guarded. He knew well how to sell coins in exchange.

Explanation—Chaucer has described several personages with consummate skill. In a few lines we are made acquainted with their features and dress, their manners and charcters; they stand out before us in strong individuality, not like portraits in a picture gallery, but as men and women living, acting, talking with us. Were, we meet with a

'Merchant' acute in his dealing, and if not always prosperous, able to impress others with the belief that he is so. He can speak of little else than his business, but is cautious not to say too much.

The merchant gave his 'reasons' or opinions on English policy, and these were always affected by his idea as to what would be good for trade and so conduce the increase of his own profits. He wished that the sea between Middleburg and Orwel were protected against any hostile action. He was expert in selling his French shields at a profit to himself.

Note—**Betwixe Middleburgh and Orewelle**—Middleburgh is in the isle of Walcheren, nearly opposite the mouth of the Orwell on the English coast.

Prof. J. W. Hales: "We are told of the Merchant that he thought it of prime moment that the passage from Harwich to Middleburgh should be swept clear of pirates."

(*13*) *For him was...................*

...........................gold in cofre. (Lines 293—298).

(*Agra University 1934*).

Modern English—It was dearer to him to have at the head of his bed twenty books, bound in black and red, of Aristotle and his philosophy rather than to have rich robes, or fiddles or gay psaltry. But although he was a philosopher, he had little gold in his coffers.

Explanation—To the class of the Parson, the Monk and the Friar, we must refer the 'Clerk of Oxenford' though as yet he had not got a benefice. He lived apart from the world, spending his little money on books, a poor but earnest scholar, grave and thoughtful in speech. He had long applied himself to logic, the principal subject in the Arts course at all medieval universities. He was still in need of his friends' help to pursue his studies, perhaps with a view to taking up the long course in Theology, but had probably taken his bachelor's degree in arts at Oxford. He would prefer to have twenty books of Aristotle and his

philosophy bound red or black lying at the head of his bed rather than rich robes, fiddle or sautrie, a small harp. But although he was a philosopher he had but little gold in his coffer. He was not very rich. Here is a hit at the astrologers of the day, whose philosophy consisted in trying to coin gold.

(*14*) *But al be that*............................

......................*and gladly teche*. (Lines 297—308).

(*Agra Univ. 1952; 1958; Punjab Univ: 1955*).

Modern English—But although he was a philosopher, he had little golc in his coffers. Nevertheless, whatever he might receive from his friends, he spent it on books and on learning, and earnestly prayed for the souls of those who gave him the means to carry on studies. He took great heed and care of his studies. He never said a word more than was necessary, and what he said was in due form and respectful in manner, short and brief and full of weighty matter. His speech tended towards moral virtues, and he was glad to learn and glad to teach.

Explanation: Chaucer's 'Clerk of Oxenford' had yet not got a benefice. He lived apart from the world, spending his little money on books, a poor but earnest scholar, grave and thoughtful in speech. He was great logician and wanted to pursue Theology.

The clerk was no doubt a philosopher well grounded in logic and dabbled well in alchemy and metaphysics but his coffer was always emp y. All that he could get from his friends he spent on books and on learning, and he earnsestly and seriously prayed for the souls of those personr who gave him the means to pursue his study. Like all othepoor students at the Universities in England and on the continent, he used to beg for his maintenance. He took the greatest care and heed of his studies. He spoke what was just and necessary and never said a word which was more than required. All that he said was in due form and reverence and it was brief and living and deep and profound. He spoke of morals. He learnt gladly and so was he pleased to teach gladly. In fact the clerk was more a scholar than anything else.

(15) Justice he was..........................

..........................not been infect. (Lines 314—320).

(Agra Univ. 1928 ; 1933 ; 1936 ; 1959).

Modern English—He had been a judge at assizes by patent and plain commission. With his learning and his great repute he had many a fee and robe. There was nowhere so great a purchaser of lands as he. To him all objects of purchase were practically estates in fee simple, so that his purchases could not be invalid.

Explanation: Chaucer's "The Sergeant of Law" is a clever and favourable picture of the shrewd and successful pleader, with every statute and precedent by rote and possessing that element of success, the art of appearing even busier and wiser than he really was. With him there was a wealthy Frankleyn or country gentleman the prototype of the port-wine-loving squire of a bygone generation, at whose ample and hospitable board the lawyer had often sat and associated in the work of the sessions. He was a country magistrate, and had sat in Parliament as knight of his shire.

The 'Sergeant of Lawe' was not a permanent judge of the court of king's Bench or Common pleas ; had he been so he could not have continued to plead. But when there were not enough judges of the superior courts to go on circuit he had often acted as an Assize judge by the king's letters patent (*i. e.*, a document 'open' for any one to read, not closed like a letter to an individual) and commission. His commission was as full and unrestricted as if he were a judge of a superior court. He was so very well known for his legal knowledge and was so well renowned that his legal knowledge and was so well renowned that his clients gave him robes in addition to his fees in money. He was a great buyer-up of land and property and there was none like him. He bought some rights over a property and converted it by chicanery into "fee simple," his skill enabling him to defeat any attempt to annul the purchase on the ground of fraud.

(*16*) *In terms hadde.......................*

.......................he pleyn by rote. (Lines 323—327).

(*Agra University 1931*).

Modern English—He knew, with their precise wording, all the legal cases and judgments which had been ruled since the times of King William. Besides, he could bring forward a legal charge and fake up a case; no person could find fault with his writing. He knew every statutes fully by heart.

Explanation—Chaucer has drawn a clever and favourable picture of 'The Sergeant of Lawe.' He was a shrewd and successful pleader, with every Statute and precedent by rote. He was sometimes the 'Judge of assise.' He was a very busy man and always he seemed busier than he was. He had all the Legal judgments from the time of William, the Conqueror arranged under the terms when they were delivered and he could quote them also. He knew well how to fake up a law suit and how to make a draft which could not be easily challenged by the opponents. No one could find fault with his written deed or document. In fact flawless it was and it spoke of the great mastery of its author. He was an expert in Law and knew every statute by heart. Thus we find that he excelled alike in pleading and in the conduct of business or drawing out of deeds.

(*17*) *To lyven in debt.....................*

.......................he in his contree. (Lines 335—340).

(*Agra University 1930 ; B. H. U. 1958*).

Modern English—To live in pleasure was ever his wont, for he was a very son of Epicurus who held the opinion that simple pleasure is truly perfect felicity. He was a house holder, and that a great one; he was the St. Jullian of his country-side.

Explanation—Chaucer's Franklin was a wealthy country gentleman, the prototype of the port-wine loving squire of a bygone generation, at whose ample and hospitable board the lawyer had often sat when associated in the work of the

sessions. In the morning he would like to take a cake dipped in wine. He was very much like Epicurus, the Greek Philosopher, who taught, indeed that the highest good is pleasure, but identified pleasure with the practice of virtue. He like the Epicureans was content with a small cup of light-wine, and was like St. Jullian always ready to provide his votaries with good lodgings and accommodation of all sorts. He was extremely hospitable. His house is likened to one of the rest houses of Jullian.

Note : Epicurus—Was the Greak philosopher of the 4th centry B. C. He advocated that : "pleasure is the chief good and aim of life."

St. Jullian—Under a misapprehension he murdered his parents. In atonement he founded a sumptuous hospital for the entertainment of strangers. Hence he was called 'hospitator.' His name was given to many houses of rest for Travellers.

(*18*) *His table dormant in....................*
..........................at morne milk (Lines 353—358).
(*Agra University 1950*).

Modern English—All the long day his table ever stood fixed in his hall ready laid. He was a lord and master at the sessions; and very often he had been knight of the shire. At his girdle there hang a knife and pouchet of silk, as white an morning's milk.

Explanation—Chaucer has beautifully described the choracteristics of his Franklin. The Franklin was an Epicurean and besides he was St. Jullian. He was known for his hospitality.

The Franklin had a fixed table, as compared with one formed simply by boards laid across trestles and removed after each meal. He was so rich and prosperous that his table was always ready for any visitor. At the sittings of the law-courts he was lord and master; often he was the knight of the shire and represented his country in Parliament 'He served his country as knight of the shire to his dying day.' He had a sort of knife as that worn by the artisans and did not wear a sword. He wore also a purse

suspended from the belt by a cord or chain, a fashion that had come in with the crusades. That purse hanging from his girdle was as white as morning milk contrasted with the darkness of night.

(*19*) *In sangwyn and in....................*

........................gold in special. (Lines 439—444).

(*Agra Univ. 1953 ; Cal. Univ. 1954*).

Modern English—He was all clad in red and blue, lined with taffeta and with thin silk. And yet he was moderate in his expenditure : he saved what he earned during the pestilence. As gold is a cordial in medicine, he loved gold above all other things.

Explanation—Chaucer's ' Doctor of Phisik ' is a capital sketch of the physician of the day. A learned ostentatious charlaton, deeply versed in astrology, magic and all the useless lore of the dark ages, though.

His studie was but little on the Bible.

Georgeously attired to command respect, temperate in his habits, and not wanting in wordly wisdom, for ' ful redy hadde he his apothecaries ' and ' ech of hem made oother for to wynne : ' a practice which is not quite-extinct in our own time, though repudiated by every honourable practitioner.

Chaucer here slyly suggests that the Doctor was dressed in Scarlet blood red and peach (blossom) colour (dark blue) clothes lined with fine thin silk (Taffata) or Sendal, the fine silk imported from India. He was moderate in expenditure and he saved whatever he acquired during the last pestilence of 1348—49, (The Black Death). He had a passion for gold because drinkable gold (aurum potabile) was a sovereign remedy in some cases and was supposed to heal and strengthen the heart.

Note—In India the ' Kushta ' of gold is said to be health giving.

This passage is a fine example of Chaucer's sly humour.

(20) *But she was somdel......................*

..........................of alle charitee. (Lines 446—452).

(*Pun. University 1952, Cal. Univ. 1952*).

Modern English—She was a little deaf and that was a misfortune. She had such skill in cloth-making, that she surpassed them of Ypres and Ghent. There was no woman in all the Parish who should take precedence of her in giving alms at the offertory ; and if any did to be sure she was so wrath that she was out of all charity.

Explanation--Chaucer's 'The Wyf of Bathe' is besides the 'Lady Prioresse' and her attendant nun, of whom, however, we have no description—the only female personage in the company. It seems strange that Chaucer who elsewhere shows his high estimation of womanly virtue, and especially of good wives, should not have given some other female characters, corresponding, for example, to the Manciple or the Frankleyn. If not a caricature, and there is no reason to suppose her to be such, she presents a dark picture of the morality of women of her class. A well-to do cloth worker from the west of England, trading on her own account, she belongs to the same grade of society as the group of city liverymen. Violent in temper, bold and wanton in dress and manners, loud, coarse, and loose in her langugage and loose in her morals, she is a living satire on the mere conventional observance of the externals of religion, having visited Rome and the Holy Sepulchre, as well as the chief shrines of the continent, and being regular in her attendance at the church in the superstitious rites of Relic Sunday, on which occasion she often gave way to her proud and overbearing disposition.

Chaucer makes his Wife of Bath deaf and shows pity for her deafness because it was the result of a blow received from her fifth husband who, while reading out sarcasms on women from an old book, suddenly found himself knocked into the fire and three leaves torn out of his precious manuscript. She was expert in cloth making which was at that time one of the chief westcountry industries. She was cleverer than the workmen who came over to teach her

from Ypres and Ghent, the centres of wool industry. She was the richest lady of the country and she led woman who went up to the altar in the order of their social rank. And if someone tried to take her position—she became very angry and forgot all about Christian Love.

(21) This noble ensample.......................

.........................shal iren doo? (Lines 496—500).

(*Pun. Univ. 1955*).

Modern English—The noble example he gave to his sheep, that first he practised and then he taught; these words he took out of the Gospel and added this simile to it that if gold rust, what shall iron do?

Explanation—Prof. Skeat remarks that "Chaucer, in his description of the parson, contrasts the piety and industry of the secular clergy with the wickedness and laziness of the religious orders of monks." Chaucer has left us in the character of the 'poure Persoun of a toun' a picture of simple, unselfish piety, such as has never been surpassed. Poor in this world's goods, 'but riche of holy thought and work", brother to a plowman, but "a lerned man, a clerk", (*i e.*, a University man), "that Cristes gospel trewely wolde prech," liberal to the poor, though poor himself; self denving and contented with his lot; he did not seek preferment, but endeavoured by gentleness and sympathy, by well judged remonstrance, and above all by his own good example, "to drawe folk to heven" his character is beautifully summed up in the last couple:

"But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve
He taught, but first he folwede it himself."

He set such a noble example to his followers and the persons who were under his care that he was the first to act and then to teach. He believed that example is better than precept. Out of the Bible he collected these words and then added a simile to them: that if gold gets rusty, what about iron?

Note—the words—"Whosoever shall do and teach them commandments, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (St. Matthew)

If gold ruste—doo ?—If the clergy were corrupt, what to say of the common folk.

(22) *He sette nat........................*

........................to been withholde. (Lines 507—511).

(*Agra Univ. 1935*).

(„ „ *1966*).

Modern English—He did not farm out his benefice, or leave his sheep stuck in the mine, and run to London: to St. Paul's to get a chantry for souls, or to be retained by some guild.

Explanation—This passage refers to a common practice in Chaucer's days. The parish Priests hired strangers to look after their duties in the parish and themselves went to London to be employed as chantry priest. A chantry was a chapel endowed by a founder for a priest to say masses to his departed soul after his death or to those of his friends and relatives. This became a common practice because the stipend for chantry priest was about the same as in the parish but without any parochial duties ; because the priest by hiring a stranger for his parish could add part of that stipend to his chantry income ; and because life in the par sh was extremely dull in those days. There was a great demand for chantry priests in Chaucer's days.

Chaucer's Parson did not leave his parish in change of a deputy while he went in search of more lucrative employment. He did not let his parishioners sink into evil and corruption and run to St. Pauls in London o gtet the office of a chantry priest and to say 'mass" for the souls of the founders of the chantry chapel or to withdraw from the world like a monk but he dwelt at home and ministered to the spiritual needs of his parishiosners so that no heresy might make way among them. In fact he did not pretend to serve the world by withdrawing from it like a monk.

Note—Unto Seint Poules—According to Dugdale there were thirty five chantries at St. Paul's served fifty four priests,

(23) *He was to synful.................................*

.......................nowher noon ys: (Lines 516—524).

(*Agra Univ. 1962*).

Modern English—He was not contemptuous towards sinners, nor aggressive nor naughty in his speech, but always balanced and kind in his teaching. To draw people to heaven by goodness and by virtuous example, this was his aim. But if it happened that any person was obstinate, whoever he was, whether of high or low estate, he would chide him sharply on accasions. I am sure there is nowhere a better priest.

Explanation—In the character of the parson Chaucer draws a picture of simple, unselfish piety as has never been surpassed. The Parson was poor but rich in thought. He was a learned man, a scholar who would truly preach Christ's gospel. He would earnestly teach his parishioners. He was kind and diligent and fully patient in adversity. He was a noble example to his people. He never leased out his ecclesiastical living to a stranger. He was a shephered and not a hireling He was holy and virtuous but was never merciless and cruel to the sinner, nor was he haughty and domineering and scornful in speech but wise and gracious in teaching. It was his task to draw people to heaven by beauty of life, and by a fair example. But if a person happened to be stubborn, no matter whether he was high or low in state he would snub sharply for the time being.

Chaucer, perhaps, was right in thinking that there was no better priest there.

(24) *The Reve was a........................*

.........................no calf y-sene. (Lines 587—592).

(*Agra Univ. 1955*).

Modern English—The Reeve was a slender choleric man; his beard was shaved as closely as could be; his hair was cropped around his ears, and the top docked in front like that of a priest. His legs were long and very lean, like a staff no calf being visible.

Explanation—Chaucer's Reeve is utterly unscrupulous an 'unjust steward' overbearing to his inferior, serving his master efficiently, though from motives purely selfish, and abusing the confidence which his ability earned him for the purpose of lining his own nest. It is fortunate that Chaucer's sketch of the Reeve presents n› difficulties, as materials for illustrating it are usually scanty. The name of the Reeve was Oswald and he came from one of the eastern countries. He was a lean and thin and an irritable man. His beard was shaven as closely as he ever could shave it. His hair was cropped short round by his ears. His skull was shaved like that of a priest. His legs were quite long and lean like a staff and no calf was visible. (Calf-the thick fleshy part of the leg behind)

(25) *And eek ye.................*

.....................men noght fynde. (Lines 642—648).

(*Agra Univ. 1929 ; Calcutta Univ. 1949*).

Modern English—And as you know well, a jay can call 'wat' as well as the pope. But if anyone probed him in some other point, then he had all his bearing spent. 'Questio Quid Juris" he would ever cry. He was a gentle and kind rogue; men may not find a better fellow.

Explanation—Chaucer has beautifully painted the picture of a Summoner, an officer of the ecclesiastical courts, a low ignorant and dissolute bully, who holds a terribe power over 'the yonge gurles of his diocese' inspite of his repulsive appearance and character. When he was intoxicated, he would then speak nothing but Latin; he knew a few Latin terms, two or three, which he had picked up from some statute He repeated those terms just as a joy or a parrot can call walter *i. e.*, can repeat a phrase by rote. But if anybody tested him in other things, he would fail miserably. After having stated his case, he added "Quid Juris"? and then proceeded to give the answer to it. He would cry: 'I question; what is the Law?" He was a gentle and kind fellow—a better fellow one should not find.

(26) *And PrivelY a...........................*

........................*..helle' seyde he.* (Lines 651—657).

(*Calcutta Univ. 1951; Punjab Univ. 1953*).

Modern English—And privately he could swindle an unsuspecting person. And if anywhere he found a jolly fellow he would advise him to have no fear in such cases of the ex-communication of the archdeacon, unless a person's soul were in his purse, for he should be punished only in his purse. 'Purse is the hell of archdeacon' he would cry.

Explanation—The Summoner was the officer of the ecclesiastical court of the Bishop, or his subordinate the Archdeacon, The court dealt with sins of immorality, witchcraft, usury, simony, neglect of the sacraments. The Archdeacon extorted fines by threats of ex-communication. The Summoners made a living for themselves, over and above their lawful fees, by threatening to report people to the Archdeacon for real or imaginary offences.

This Summoner of Chaucer is a rogue. He could plunder and cheat a foolish fellow. If he found a good fellow he would teach him to have no fear of the curse of the Archdeacon unless he minded paying a sum and buying off the penalty *i. e.*, if he were not too much set on his money, he might purchase exemption. He told him that if he would be punished in his purse only; and that he would not go to hell; the only hell would be the payment of money.

This shows that even the Archdeacon was not free from corruption.

(27) *But of his craft....................*

...................was oure lady veyl. (Lines 691—695).

(*Calcutta Univ. 1952*).

Modern English—But as for his trade, there was no such other pardoner between Berwick and Ware; for in his bag he had a pillow case which he said was the veil of our lady.

Explanation—Chaucer's Pardoner is a contemptible and hypocritical seller of indulgences. His wallet is bretful of pardouns come from Rome 'al hoot', and he has an inexhaustible stock of reliques and bones, which the poet insinuates are those of Pigs, not saints. From Berwick-on Tweed in the north, to Ware near London, from one end of England to another, there was not another pardoner. In his bag he had a pillow case which he said was the veil of Virgin Mary. In fact he was a cheat of the first order.

This shows that any rubbish was palmed off upon the ignorant piety of the pilgrims as genuine relics of Christ, Virgin Mary and the Saints.

(28) *He seyde he ....*

.........................the peple his apes. (Line 696—706).

(*Punjab Univ. 1953*).

Modern English—He also said that he had a piece of the sail used by St. Peter when he went out upon the sea till Jesus Christ caught him. He had a cross of litten set with stones, and some pig's bones in a glass. But with these relics, when he found a poor person dwelling on land, he got out of him more money than that person earned in two months. And thus with feigned flattery and tricks he made that person, and other people, his dupes.

Explanation—Choucer's Pardoner was a cheat of the highest order. From one end of England to the other he went with a wallet and a pillow-case describing it as Mary's veil. In his wallet he had the pieces of sail that St. Peter had when he went upon the sea when Christ caught him. He had a cross made of brass and copper and some stones were studded in it; he had in a glass some pig bones. When he met a poor and innocent man in the country, he showed these relics to him and extracted from him more money than he could earn in two months. Thus with feigned flattery and jests he made the fool of the people.

(29) *Wel koude he rede.....................*

.... murierly and loude. (Lines 709—714).

(*Agra Univ. 1950 ; Cal. Univ. 1950 ; Pun. Univ. 1956*).

Modern English—He could read well a lesson or a story, but best of all he sang an offertory; for he knew well when the song was sung, he must preach and polish his tongue well, to win as much silver as he can. Therefore he sang merrily and loudly.

Explanation—Chaucer has painted his rogue in true colours. The pardoner was a cheat and he very well knew the tricks of deceiving people. But in church he was a noble ecclesiast He could very well read a passage from the Bible or could nicely narrate a story from the lives of Saints. In the Mass before the bread and wine were brought to the altar, he sang the anthem, the offertory. He gave the sermons also with a smooth tongue. With his polished words and phrases he knew how to extract money from the people. Money came to him and so he sang loudly and merrily.

(Add in the beginning of the Explanation the first Para of Expl. 27)

(30) *For this ye knowen......................*

.... as an other. (Lines 730—738).

(*Cal. Univ. 1953 ; P.U. 1953 ; A. U. 1954*).

Modern English—For you know this as much as I do that whoever will reproduce, as a tale narrated by a man must reproduce, as near as can, every word, if it be his responsibility, although he speak never so rudely and freely. Or otherwise he must tell his tale falsely, or feign, or find new words. He may not spare any, even if it were his own brother. He must say one word as well as another.

Explanation—Chaucer after having described the pilgrims in detail, proceeds to tell us apologetically that he must stick to the truth however unpleasant it may be. That is what he intends to do, and should be forgiven if persons and things described are sometimes disagreeable.

Chaucer requests the readers not to impute any want of breeding if he speaks plainly about the people. He tells them that they as well as he very well know that whosoever tells the story of a man, must relate as closely as ever he can every single word; if he is charged with it although he never spoke so rudely or freely or otherwise he shall make the story untrue or make up things or find new words. He may not spare one although one might be his brother. He should as well say one word as another.

(*31*) *Amorwe, whan that.......................*

..........................if you leste. (Lines 822—828).

(*Punjab University 1952*).

Modern English—On the morrow, when the day began to spring, our host arose and acted as a cock to us all, assembled us together, all in a flock, and we rode forth, a little faster than a walk, up to the watering of St. Thomas. And there our host drew up his horse, and said "Sirs, listen; if you will."

Explanation—In the Pilgrimage to Canterbury, Chaucer tells us that the Host is elected the leader of the party. Early next morning he gets them together and they start on their pilgrimage. On reaching the watering of St. Thomas he casts lots to settle the order of the narrator of two tales on the way to Pilgrimage as it was decided that to pass away the time pleasantly and to make the journey light it was incumbent on each pilgrim to tell two stories on the way to Canterbury and two on their way back.

Note—Waterying of St. Thomas—a brook near the second milestone on the Canterbury Road, where pilgrims watered their horses.

PART VI
CRITICAL OPINIONS

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SOME CRITICISMS ON THE PROLOGUE

1

The Canterbury Tales have come down to us in some sixty different manuscripts, of which, however, many are imperfect. Eight manuscripts have been printed, but three of these (the Corpus, Petworth, and Lansdowne) are of little use. The manuscripts here used are those called, from their present or former owners, the Ellesmere, Cambridge (Cambridge University Library, M. S. Gg 4) Hengwrt, and Harleian (British Museum Harleian MS. 7334. Of these the Ellesmere is the best spelt and most carefully edited, and as such has been adopted as the basis of the text of all recent editions. The Cambridge and Hengwrt MSS are both useful in correcting blunders of the Ellesmere scribe, and also, more especially the latter, offer some interesting alternative readings. The Harleian, not in other respects a very good manuscript, offers a large number of alternati ve readings, and the value of these is much disputed. We know that Chaucer's contemporaries Langland and Gower, continually revised their poems, and at every revision introduced small changes. We know that Chaucer himself revised his *Troilus and Cressida* in this way, and that he entirely re-wrote much of the Prologue to the Legend of Good Women. Owing to the fact that the *Canterbury Tales* were never completed it is possible that not many copies of them were made during Chaucer's life, and the ferwer the copies the less is the likelihood of his having introduced changes into the text while superintending the making of new copies. If he introduced no changes into the text, than there can be no such thing as an alternative reading. In every case only one reading can be right, and the rest are merely blunders or guesses of scribes. I understand this to be the theory of Dr. Liddell and of the German Scholars, who, construct diagrams to show the pedigree of the extant manuscripts through various hypothetical stages of descent.

My own belief is that Chaucer did introduce changes into the text, and that it is impossible for us now to distinguish in all cases between changes which may have been made by a clever scribe and those which may be the second thoughts of the poet himself I, therefore, feel free occasionally to introduce into the text what appears to be a better reading on the authority of the Harleian Ms. only (H.), though as a rule. I think it is only when the Harleian is supported by the Hengwrt (Hn.) or Cambridge MS. that the Ellesmere text should be altered.

—A. W. Pollard.

2

"..........As for the religion of our poet, he seems to have some little bias towards the opinions of Wicliffe, after John of Gaunt his patron.........yet, I cannot blame him for inveighing so sharply against the vices of the clergy in his age: their pride, their ambition, their pomp, their avarice, their worldly interest, deserved the lashes which he gave them, both in that and in most of his *Canterbury Tales*. Neither has his contemporary Boccace spared them: yet both these poets lived in much esteem with good and holy men in orders; for the scandal which is given by particular priests reflects not on the sacred function. Chaucer's Monk, his Canon, and his Friar, took not from the character of his good Parson. A satirical poet is the check of the laymen on bad priests.......

He must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature because, as it has been truely observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his *Canterbury Tales* the various manners and humours (as we now call them) of the whole English nation in his age. Not a single character has escaped him. All his pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations but in their very physiognomies and persons. Baptisa Porta could not have described their natures better than by the marks the poet gives them. The matter and manners of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humours, and callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the

grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity, their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling and their breeding; such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some virtuous, some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different; the Reeve the Miller, and the Cook are several men, and distinguished from each other much as the mincing Lady Prioress and the broad-speaking gap-toothed Wife of Bath. But enough of this, there is such a variety of game springing up before me that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the poverb, that here is God's plenty. We have our forefathers and great grand-dames all before us, as they were in Chaucer's days: their general characters are still remaining in mankind and even in England, though they are called by other names than those of monks and friars and canons and lady abbesses and nuns: for mankind is ever the same, and nothing lost out of Nature, though everything is altered." Dryden: *Praface to the Fables*.

3

".........He is contented to find grace and beauty in truth. He exhibits for the most part the naked object, with little drapery thrown over it. His metaphors, which are few, are not for ornament, but use, and as like as possible to the things themselves. He does not affect to show his power over the reader's mind, but the power which his subject has over his own. The readers of Chaucer's poetry feel more nearly what the persons he describes must have felt, than perhaps those of any other poet. His sentiments are not voluntary effusions of the poet's fancy but founded on the natural impulses and habitual prejudices of the characters he has to represent. There is an inveteracy of purpose, a sincerity of feeling, which never relaxes or grows vapid, in whatever they do or say. There is no artificial, pompous display, but a strict parsimony of the poet's materials, like the rude simplicity of the age in which he

lived. His poetry resembles the root just springing from the ground, ra her than the full blown flower. His name is no 'babbling gossip of the air,' fluent and redundant; but like a stammerer, or a dumb person, that has just found the use of speech, crowds many things together with eager haste, with anxious pauses, and fond repetitions to prevent mistake. His words point as an index to the objects, like the eye or finger. There were none of the common-places of poetic diction in our author's time, no reflected lights of fancy, no borrowed roseate tints; he was obliged to inspect things for himself, to look narrowly and almost to handle the object, as in the obscurity of morning we partly see and partly grope our way; so that his descriptions have a sort of tangible character belonging to them, and produce the effect of sculpture on the mind. Chaucer had an equal eye for truth of nature and discrimination of character; and his interest in what he saw gave new distinctness and force to his power of observation. The picturesque and the dramatic are in him closely blended together and hardly distinguishable; for he principally describes external appearances as indicating character, as symbols of internal sentiment There is a meaning in what he sees; and it is this which catches his eye by sympathy. Thus the costume and dress of Canterbury Pilgrims—of the Knight—the Squire,—the Oxford Scholar, —the Gaptoothed Wile of Bath and the rest, speak for themselves." Hazlitt: *Lectures on the English Poets.*

4

"Although his prose writing merits no particular notice, it is difficult to pass over the name of Chaucer without marking the high pitch of perfection to which he brought the art of narration in verse. Not until centuries after his time could there be found in English prose the equivalent of his spirited incident, his delicate characterisation. his dramatic realism, his sly gentle humour. It is not merely that he succeeded, alone among the writers of his age and nation, in ridding himself of the allegorical fetters that cramped the growth of English literature even in the fifteenth centuary. It is not only that he had an nuexampled

dramatic genius, which prompted him to substitute for the statical scheme of the *Decameron*, a brilliant dynamical scheme of his own, instinct with life and grace. The greatness of Chaucer's dramatic power has left its impress on his story-telling in a hundred subtleties of inspired observation, to be equalled only by the sudden startling dramatic felicities of the great romantic playwrights. But first of all he was a great narrative artist, incomparably the greatest of an age that loved story telling and knew nothing of the drama. He is a master of all those effects beyond the scope of the dramatist proper, to be obtained from the apposite intrusion of himself as narrator, pointing a moral or interposing a reflection, laughing or criticising expressing incredulity or sympathy. Thus, in the *Prologue* he hastens to dissent from the Sumpnour's cynical contempt for the archdeacon's curse, and adds, with humorous ambiguity, his own conviction—

For curs wol slee right as assoillyng saveth.

In the *Knight's Tale*, he refuses, on the ground that he is no 'divinister', to speculate on the fate of the soul of Arcite :—

His spirit changed was, and wente ther
As I cam never, I can not tellen wher

In *Troilus and Cressida* he is constantly at the reader's elbow, disclaiming skill in love, discussing the conduct of the heroine, defending her from the charge of immodesty in the ready bestowal of her affections, pleading for her even in her infidelity :—

For she so sory was for hir untrouthe
Y-wis, I wolde excuse hir yet for routhe.

And some of the most beautiful of his reflective passages are interpolated as his own criticisms on the narrative ...Yet when he comes, in the *Clerk's Tale*, to tell of a love that was cruelly "constrained by mastery" and survived it, he is at no loss for a criticism ; after the heart-rending pathos of the story of Griselda, he turns lightly, in the inimitable *Envoy*, on the "arch-wives" of his own day, satirically counselling them against taking Griselda

for a model, and warning their husbands that the story is an insecure precedent.

The illuminative play of his own thought and humour around the incidents of the stories he tells so tersely and vividly gives to Chaucer much of his greatness as a narrator......"

Sir Walter Raleigh : *The English Novel.*

5

The portraits of the *Canterbury Tales* prove very instructive to whoever tries to discover the relation between the means employed by the poet and the ends achieved. We also ought to consider his style or rather the various kinds of style in which Chaucer casts his conceptions.

The portraits of the pilgrims were gathered together by Chaucer in the Prologue, which is a veritable picture gallery. These twenty-nine companions of the road are like so many pictures hung on a wall. It is impossible to imagine a more direct, nay, one may well say a more naive mode of presentation. The most primitive artist of today would not be s tisfied with such a monotonous method, and the most expert would shun a repetition of such audaciously simple means. Out of their frames, set at equal distance from each other, hung on the same plane at the same height, the pilgrims look at us in turn. The only diversity is caused by two frames left unfilled perhaps provisionally, with only the names written at the bottom, that of the Nun, Chaplain to the Prioress, and that of the priest accompanying her ; or again by the five city artisans, members of one guild, who appear together on the same canvas, for the poet did not think it necessary to make a portrait of each.

Chaucer proceeds in precisely the same way as the primitives, giving all his attention to the exact drawing of the features and the choice of emblems. He has further in common with them a certain well meaning clumsiness, a sort of stiffness in the contours, a fondness for trifling details which causes one to smile at first, finally a preference for bright colours, applied in uniform tints with no

half tones. Details in contours, seem to follow each other at haphazard; touches of dress or equipment alternate with notes referring to character, these lapse for a while and again reappear. If he is describing the morals of a pilgrim, he sometimes interrupts himself to add a little more colour to his face or to his cloak-delightful negligences which make us forget the writers's art and increase the impression of truthfulness.

On entering the gallery, the eye is at first drawn to the brilliant patches of colour conspicuous in some portraits. Such is for instance the grown worn by the young Squire, all embroidered,

(Canterbury Tales, Prologue 1.89)

and next to him the Forester, who serves him 'clad in cote and hood of grene." The row of beads, worn by the Prioress around her arm, stands out in strong relief against her robes. It was of coral and every tenth bead was green, and appended to the beads was a brooch of gold. What a contrast between the ruddy complexion of the Franklin and his beard, white "as is the dayesye." We cannot take our eyes off the hose "of fyn scarlot reed," so right and smooth, worn by the Wife of Bath, any more than we can help noticing the Pardoner's hair "as yellow as wex," hanging on his shoulders like a soft "strike ot flex."

There are a few faces which, for vividness of colour, are just as remarkable as the garments: the pimply face of the Somnour, fiery-red like a cherub's, flaming under his dark eye-brows; the Miller's with his reddish beard, and on his nose the famous wart surmounted by a tuft of hair, the two black holes of his nostrils and his mouth as big as a furnace.

But there are duller tints for the eye to rest on, which by contrast, help further to throw into relief the bright colours by their side: the fustain doublet of the doughty and modest Knight, all soiled by his hauberk: the threadbare cloak of the poor Clerk, the greyish coat of the grave Man of Law, the bluish grey "surcote" of the slender Reve, and what is most remarkable, the absence of all indication of consume and colour in the portrait of the good Parson,

which we are free to imagine illumined only by the radiant evangelical light of his eyes.

Chaucer then was able to rival the art of the painter. His portraits are as good as illuminated miniatures, and on reading the Prologue we have no need to regret that the Pilgrims were not reproduced on canvas by some contemporary master. The poet, moreover, has resources unknown to the painter, for sounds are at his disposal as well as colours. Chaucer is equally fortunate in turning these to advantage. He listens with equal pleasure to the jingling of the bells on the Monk's palfrey, to the pretty snuffling speech of the Prioress, to the effected lisp of the Friar, to the Pardoner's voice "as small as hath a goot," to the deep bass voice of the Somnour, garlic-laden and more deafening than any "trompe."

We would have to quote nearly the whole of the Prologue as an instance of these concrete details, which give so clear an impression of a person. The essential moral traits are set forth with the same apparent simplicity, the same command over the means of expression which Chaucer displayed in depicting typical colours or garments. Simple biographical notes, suggestive anecdotes, traits peculiar to the individual or to his trade, lines which sum up a character, all these units on the canvas into a forcible whole, with clean and vigorous outlines, albeit a little stiff at times, bathed in a clear atmosphere, a picture never to be forgotten And our thoughts wander back to those primitive painters, whom we are inclined to consider at first with the patronising air of grown-ups for children, but whose art in the end reveals itself to us as so conscientious, so exact and soul-searching, that we wonder whether the progress since accomplished in painting does not merely consist in exterior cleverness and idle subtlety, designed to evade or to obscure that which is essential.

The greatest difficulty of all was to represent these thirty pilgrims distinct one from the other, and we saw that Chaucer attained his object by embodying in each of them the type of one profession. But he used other means

besides to avoid confusion. He painted them all with equal conscientiousnes, but not with the same depth. Whilst some of the pilgrims—the Merchant, the Man of Law, the Doctor, for instance are only presented with the characteristics of their profession, most of the other combine these with other traits which strengthen them or mitigate their stiffness. Although he never omits the peculiarities appertaining to the trade (and this is what renders the pilgrims truly representative), Chaucer sometimes restricts or directs them with a view either to idealisation or to satire. If the Knight is a pattern of bravery, or the village Parson the model of good shepherds, or the Oxford Clerk the type of a disinterested love of learning—inversely the Monk, the Friar, the Somnour, the Pardoner, without being at any time caricatures, do combine in their character the least estimable traits of their tribe. Sometimes also a different kind of generalisation is used to strengthen the first one: the Squire is at the same time youth, the Ploughman perfect charity in the poor; the Wife of Bath the very essence of satire against women.

But this is not all: he strengthens perfunctory or earlier generalisations by adding details supplied by direct observation. He combines personal with generic traits, and even when he is painting a type he gives one the impression of painting a unique specimen discovered by chance This applies to the Miller, the Reve, most of the clerics and above all to the Prioress and to the Wife of Bath. The proportion of these different elements is variously graded with an infinite cleverness not always apparent. More general traits would have turned the picture into a frozen symbol, an uninteresting abstraction; more individual traits would have confused it by depriving

the mind of obvious means of identification.

Thus English society, which appeared to a visionary like Langland a seething and confused mass, where man pressed against man in a sort of semi darkness, becomes with Chaucer a well-defined and well-lit group, both limited and representative of men who stop before us just long enough to enable us to form an idea of their personality. Each lives his life independently of the others, and will always be easily recognised, but their reunion sums up almost the whole of contemporary society.

—Legouiose.

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(and Chaucerian Grammar fully illustrated)

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gesse (*v. inf.*)—guess, think, 82, 117.

gat, geten (*v. inf.*)—get, obtain ; gat, 3 *sing. pret. refl.* got for himself, 703 ; geten, *p. p. refl.* . obtained, acquired, 291.

gipser (*s*.)—pouch, bag, 357.
girles (*s. pl.*)—young people, boys or girls, 664.
girt (*p. p.* as *adj.*)—wearing a girdle, 329.
gobet (*s*.)—piece, fragment, 696.
goliardeys (*s.*)—jester, buffoon, 560.
good (*s.*) goods, property, 581, 611.
governaunce (*s.*)—rule, management, 281,

governour (*s.*)—arbitrator, umpire, 813 ; ruler, governor, 861.

grece (*s.*)—grease, 135.

greet (*adj.*)—great, 84, 137, 312, 559 ; *def.* grete, 59 ; as subst. a *greet*, a great one, 339.

grope (*v. inf.*)—try, test, 644.
ground (*s.*)—foundation, 453.
grounded (*p. p. as adj.*)—instructed, 414.
grys (*s.*)—a kind or fur, 194.
gyde (*s.*) -guide, 804.
gynglen (*v. inf.*)—jingle, 170.
gypon, gypoun (*s.*)—doublet, 75.

H

haberdasshere (*s.*)—dealer in small wares, 361.

habergeon, haubergeoun (*s.*)—coat of mail, hauberk, 76.

halwes (*s. pl.*)—saints, shrines of saints, 14.

hange (*v. hang*)—heeng, heng, 3 *sing. pret.* hung, 160, 358, 676.

happe (*v. inf.*)—happen, befall, 585.

harlot (*s.*)—fellow, 647.

horlatries (*s. pl.*)—unseemly jests, 561.

harm (*s.*)—harm, pity, matter for regret, 385 : malady, injury, 423.

harneised (*p. p.*)—mounted *of the metal, ornaments on a dagger*), 114.

harre (*s.*)—hinge, 550.

haunt (*s.*)—habit, practice, 447.

have, haven (*v. inf have*)—han, 1, 2, 3, *pl. pres.* 849; hadde. 1 and 3 *sing. pret.* 31, 48. 52, 56; hade (*for the sake of rhyme,*) 554, 617.

havenes (*s. pl.*)—harbours, ports, 407.

he (*pers. pron.* 3 *sing. masc*)—44; hym, *dat.* and *acc. sing.* 102, 201, 602. hem, *dat.* and *acc. pl.*, 11, 18, 148.

heep (*s.*)—crowd, heap, 575.

heere (*v. inf.*)—hear; herde, 3 *sing. pret.*, 221, 641, herd, *p. p.* 849.

heigh (*adj.*)—high, great, 522; in heigh and lough, in all matters, great and small, 817.

herberwe (*s.*)—harbour, 403; inn, 765.
hethenesse (*s.*)—heathendom, heathen lands, 49.
heve (*v. inf. heave*)—lift, 550.
hewe (*s.*)—colour, complexion, 394.
hider, hyder (*adv*)—hither, 672.
hierde (*s.*)—herdsman, shepherd, 603.
hipes (*s. pl.*)—hips, 472.
hir (3 *pers. pron. gen. pl*)—of them, hir aller, of them all, 586.

hir (3 *poss. pron. fem.*)—her, 120.

hire, hir (3 *pers. pron. fem. dat. acc.*)—her, 126.

holde, holden (*v. inf. hold*)—heeld, 3 *sing. pret.* considered, 182; agreed with, 176; hoold, *impers. sing.* hold up, 783; holde, holden, *p. p.* held, considered. 141.

hoit (*s.*)—Wood, copse, 6.

holwe (*adv*)—with hollow eyes, 289.

hond (*s*)—hadde the hyer hond, have the victory, get the better of, 399; ley hond to, begin, come on, 841.

honeste (*adj.*)—respectable, seemly, 246.
hy (*adj.*)—high, lofty, 306: hyer, compar., 309.
hye (*adv.*)—high, aloft, 271.
hyne (*s.*)—hind, farm servant, 603.
hyre (*s.*)—hire, 507, 538.

I

ilke (*adj.*)—same, 64, 175.
infect (*adj.*)—invalid, illegal, 320.
inne (*adv.*)—within, 41.

J

janglere (*s.*)—jester, story-teller, 560.
japes (*s. pl.*)– jests, tricks, 705.
jet (*s*)—fashion, mode, 682.
juge (*s*)—judge, umpire, 814.
juste (*v. inf.*)—joust, compete in tournament, 96.

K

kan (*v. pret. pres. know, understand*)—3 *sing. pres.* 210; koude, 3 *sing. pret.* could, was able, 94, 95, 10̣5.

keepe (*s.*)—heed, care; take keepe, observe, perceive, understand, 503, heed, 398.

kepe (*v. inf. keep, watch, guard*)—134; kepte. 3 *sing. pret.* kept, saved, 442; took care of, 415; kept *p. p.* guarded, kept, 276.

kepere (*s.*)—prior, 172.

kerve (*v. inf. carve, cut*)—carf, 3 *sing. pret.* carved, 100.
knarre (*s.*)—a knot in a wood; *fig.* a square, broad-set fellow, 549.

knobbes (*s.pl.*)—knobs, boils, 633.
kowthe (*p. p. pl. as adj.*)—renowned, famous, 14.

L

laas, las (*s.*)—lace, string, 392.

lady (*s.*)—*voc.* 839; *gen.* 19, 88, 695.

lakke (*v. inf. fail, be wanting*)—lakked, lakkede, 3 *sing. pret.*, was lacking, 756.

latoun (*s.*)—an alloy of metel, chiefly copper and zinc. 699.

leed (*s.*)—cauldron, 202.

leef, lief (*adj.*)—lief, dear, agreeable; levere, hym was levere, it was pleasanter to him, he preferred, 293.

lekes (*s. pl.)*—leeks, 634.
lene (*ger.*)—lend, 611.
lessoun (*s.*)—passage of Holy Scripture, 709.
lest (*s.*)—pleasure, desire, 132.
leste (*v. impers.*)—3 *sing. pret.*, it pleased, 750, 787.

leet (*v. inf. suffer, leave*)—let, 1 *sing. pres.* let, leave suffer, 873 ; leet, 3 sing. pret. let, suffered, allowed, 128, 175 : leet out, left, abandoned, 508 ; lat, *impers. sing.* let, 188 ; lat be, do away with, give up, 840 ; lat se, let us see, 831.

letuaries (*s. pl.*)—remedies, 426.

leve (*v. inf. leave.*)—lafte, 1 *sing. pret.* neglected, omitted, 492.

lewed *adj.*)—ignorant, unlettered, 502, 574.

licour (*s.*)—sap, moisture, 3.

liketh (*v. impers.*)—3 *sing. pres.*, if you liketh, if it pleases you, 777.

lipsed (*v.* 3 *sing. pret.*)—lisped, 264.

list (3 *sing. pres. impers, it, pleases*)—liste, 3 *sing. pret. impers.* it pleased, 102.

lode-menage (*s.*)—pilotage, 403.

lokkes (*s. pl.*)—locks; curls, 81.

lond (*s.*)—land, 194, 400, 579 ; *pl.* londes, 14 ; upon lond, in the country, 702.

loore (*s.*)—teaching, doctrine, 527.

looth (*adj.*)—loath, disagreeable ; hym were looth, it would be repugnant to him, 486.

lordynges (*s. pl.*)—sirs, masters, a term of address, 761, 788.

loude (*adv.*)—loudly, 171, 672, 714.
lovedayes (*s. pl.*)—love days, of arbitration, 258.
lust (*s.*)—pleasure, delight, 192.
lusty (*adj.*)—marry, gay, 80.

lye (*v. inf. lie, remain*)—lay, 1 *sing. pret.*, lodged, 20 ; lay, was placed, 686.

lymytour (*s.*)—limitor, a friar licensed within a certain district, 209.

lystes (*s. pl.*)—lists, boundaries enclosing the field on which tournaments were held, 63.

lytarge (*s.*)--ointment of protoxide of lead, 629.

lyve (*v. inf. live*)—506, 581 ; *ger* lyven, 335 ; lyvynge. *pres. part*, 532.

lyveree (*s.*)—livery, habit of a guild, 363.

M

maister, mayster (*s.*)—master ; magister, a person in authority, 26¹.

make, maken (*v. inf.*)—make, render, cause, 114, make a vaunt. boast, 227 ; maked, made, 3 *sing.*, *pret.*, 526.

male (*s.*)—bag, wallet, 694.

man (*s.*)—167, 209, 223 : mannes, *gen. sing.* 574, 656 ; pl. men, 178, 575 ; unemphatic as *indef.* pronoun with sing. verb, one, 149, 232

maner, manere (*s.*)—sort, kind, 71 ; manere, deportment, bearing, 140 ; manere, way, method, 876.

mary-bones (*s. pl.*)—marrow-bones, 380.

mateere, mater (*e*) (*s.*)—matter. business, 727.

mauncible (*s.*)—an official in the Inns of Court, 586

medlee (*adj.*) –striped, of a mixed colour, 328.

meede (*s.*)—reward, 770.

meede (*s.*)—meadow, 89.

mere (*s.*)—a mare, poor horse, 541

mesurable (*adj.*)—moderate, 435.

mete (*s.*)—meat, food, 136, 343, 348 ; at mete, at table, 127.

mo (*adj.* compar.)—more, used as a neuter substantive with dependent genitive, 576, 849.

moore (*adv.*)—in greater measure, 219.

moost (*super. adj.*)—used as *subt.*, 561.

moot (*v. pret. must, shall, ought*)—3 *sing.* men moot, one ought, 252; must, 732, 735; moote, 3 *pres. pl.* 742, mote I, *I sing. pres. subj.*, 832; he moste, he had to 712, 847.

mormal (*s.*)—sore, 386.

mortreux (*s.*)—a dish, 384.

motteleye (*s.*)—motley, striped clothing, 271.

mowe, mowen (*v. pret. pres. be able*)—3 *sing. pres.* may, 737; 3 *sing. pret.* mighte, 169; myghte, 299, 320.

moyste (*pl. adj.*)—moist, pliable, soft, 457; as *subt.* moisture, 420.

muchel (*adj.*)—much, great; used as *subs.* with dependent genitive, 211.

muchel (*adj.*)—greatly 258; a great deal, 467; ful muchel, very greatly, 132.

murierly (*compar. adv.*)—the more merrily, 47 .

muwe (*s.*)—mew, coop, 349.

myre (*s.*)—m re, mud, 508.

myrie (*adj.*)—merry, 57, 764.

myscarie (*v. inf.*)—go astray, 513.

myster (*s.*)—handicraft, trade, 613.

N

nacions (*s. pl.*)—nations, 53.

namo (*na moo*)—no more, 101, 544.

narwe (*adj. pl.*)—narrow, (*of the eyes*) wearing a somewhat inebriated expression, heavy with drink, 625.

nas (*ne was*)—was not, 251, 288.

nat (*adv.*)—not, 74. 150, 428.

ne . ne (*conj.*)—neither......nor, 603.

nede (*v. inf. be necessary*)—needeth, nedeth, 3 *sing., pres.* 462; what nedeth, what is the need of, why, 304.

neer (*compar. adv.*)—neerer, 839.

neet (*s. pl.*)—neat, cattle, 597.

nekke (*s.*)—neck, 238, 393.

newe (*adv.*)—newly-freshly, 365, recently, 428.
noght (*adv.*)—not by no means, 107, not even, 253.
nones—for the, for the nones, for the occasion, 379, 545.
nonne (*s.*)—nun, 118, 163.

noon (*indef. pron.*)—none, not one, 318, 449, 524; *adj.* no one, not any, 654.

noot (*ne woot*)—*I sing.* know not, 284.
norissyng (*s.*)—nourishment, 437.
nosethirles (*s. pl.*)—nostrils, 557.
note (*s.*)—note, tune, 255.
nowthe (*adv.*)—just now at present, 462.
ny (*adv.*)—closely, 588, 732.
nyce (*adj.*)—scrupulous, 398.
nyghtertale (*s.*)—by nyghtertale, in the night time, 77.

O

o (*num, adj.*)—one, 304, 363, 738.

of (*prep.*)—of so litel space, within so short a time, 87; with partitive force, some; of smale houndes, some small hounds, 146

offertorie (*s.*)—offertory, sentences sung while the alms are being collected, 710

office (*s.*)—service, public appointment, 292.

offrynge (*s.*)—offering, 450.

ofte (*adj. pl.*)—many, ofte sithes, many times, 485, ofte tyme, many a tyme, 52, 356.

oon (*num. adj.*)—one, 48; by oon assent, by common assent, 817; many oon, many a one, 317; oon and oon, singly, one by one, 679; after oon, alike, 341.

ordre (*s.*)—monastic order, 214, 220.

out of (*prep. without*)—out of alle charitee, without any charitee, 452.

outrely (*adv.*)—utterly, entirely, 237.

outridere (*s.*)—rider out, inspector, 166.

over (*adj. comp. upper*)—overeste, *adj. superl.* uppermost topmost, 290.

overal (*adj.*)—everywhere, 216, 249.
overlippe (*s.*)—upper lip, 133.
oghte (*v. inf.*)—oghte, 3 *sing. pret.* ought, 505, 660.
owene (*adj. def. own*)—213, 336, 611.
owher (*adv.*)—anywhere, 653.
oynement (*s.*)—ointment, 631.

P

paas (*s.*)—pace, walking pace, 825.
pace (*v. inf. pass, go*)—slip. pass away, 175: pass on; proceed, 36; surpass, 574.
pacient (*s.*)—patient, invalid, 415, 418.
paire (*s.*)—pair, 473, peire, set, 159.
pardee (*interj.*)—by God, 563.
pardoner (*s.*)—seller of indulgence, 543, 659, 675.
parfit, parfyt (*adj.*)—perfect, 72, 338. 422, 532.
partrich (*s.*)—partridge, 349.
parvys (*s.*)—church-porch, 310.
pees (*s.*)—peace. 532.
pers (*adj.*)—dark blue, 439.
peyne (*v. refl. to take pains*)—3 *sing, pret. refl.*, 139.
phisik (*s.*)—physic, medicine, 411, 413, 443.
piled (*p. p. peeled, without hair*)—piled beard, thin beard, 627.
pilwe-beer (*s.*)—pillow-case 604.
pitaunce (*s.*)—pittance, allowance of food, 224
pitous (*adj.*)—full of pity, compassionate, 143.
pleyn (*adj.*)—full, absolute, 315, 337.
pleyn (*adj.*)—plainly, to the point, 790.
point (*s.*) point of a spear, 114; in good poynt, in good condition, 200.
pomely (*adj.*)—dappled; pomely grey, dappled grey, 616.
pope (*s.*)—pope, person in great authority, 261; a learned person, 643.
poraille (*s.*)—poor people, paupers, 247.
port (*s.*)—bearing manner, 69, 138.

post (*s.*)—support, pillar, 214.
poudre-merchant (*s* —a pungent spice, 381.
poure *geru. pore over, study closely*)—185.
poure (*adj.*)—poor, 225, 478.
poynaunt (*s.*)—pungent, highly flavoured, 352.
praktisour (*s.*)—practitioner, 422.
preche (*v. inf.*)—preach, 481, 712.
preest (*s.*)—priest, 501, 524.
prikasour (*s.*)—a hard rider, 189.
priketh (*v. inf. prick. urge*)—incites, 3 *sing. pres.*, 11.
prikyng (*s.*)—hard riding, 191.
principio in—in the beginning, 254.
pris (*s.*)—price, cost, 815 : prize, 237 ; prys, reputation, fame, 67.

propre (*adj.*)—own, 540, 581.

pulle (*v. inf. pull, pluck*)—pulle a fynch, pluck a finch, gull a fool, 652 ; a pulled hen, a plucked hen, a thing of no value, 177.

purchas (*s.*)—gain made by begging, 256.

purchasour (*s.*)—buyer up of land, 318.

purtreye (*v. inf.*)—draw, 96.

pye (*s.*)—pie, pastry, 384.

pynche (*v. inf.*)—find fault with, 326 ; p. p., pynched closely pleated, 151.

Q

questio (*quid juris*)—the question is, what of the law ? *i. e.*, how stands the law ? 646.

quyk (*adj.*)—alive, animated. 306.

quite (*v. inf. requite, reward*)—3 *pres. subj.* quite you youre meede, pay you your reward, 770.

R

rage (*v. inf., behave wantonly*)—267.
reche (*v. inf., reach, stretch forth hand*)—raughte, 3 *sing. pret.*, 136.

rede (*v. inf. counsel, advise, read*)—709 ; understand, 741.

reed (*s.*)—adviser, councillor, 665.
reed (*adj.*)—red, 153, 294, 456.
rekenyng (*s.*)—reckoning, account, 600.
renne (*v. inf. run*)—ran. 3 *sing. pret.*, 509.
rennyng (*s.*)—running, at a run, 551.
reportour (*s.*)—reporter, judge, umpire, 814.
resoun (*s.*)—reason, common sense, 37 ; as was resoun, as was reasonable, 847.

reule (*s.*)—rule, monastic discipline, 173.
reve (*s.*)—reeve, farm-bailiff, 542.
reyn (*s.*)—rain, 492, 595.
reysed (*p. p.*)—undertaken a military expedition, 54.
right (*adj.*)—just actually, 257 ; exactly, 535.
roost (*s.*)—roast meat, 206.
rote (*s.*)—a musical instrument, 236
rouncy (*s.*)—horse of little value, hack, 390.
rounded (3 *sing. pret.*)—stood out round, 263.
route (*s.*)—company, rout, 622.

S

sangwyn (*s.*)—stuff of a blood-red colour, 439.
sautrie (*s.*)—psaltery, a sort of harp, 296.
sawcefleem (*adj.*)—having a red pimpled face, 625.
scaled (*adj.*)—scaly, scurfy, 627.
scarsly (*adj.*)—frugally, 533.

scathe (*s.*)—harm, damage ; that was scathe, that was a pity, 446.

science (*c.*)—science, knowledge, 316.
sclendre (*adj.*)—slender, 587.
semely (*adj.*)—seemly : suitable, 751.
semely, semyly (*adv.*)—suitably, 123, 136, 151.
semycope (*s.*)—short cope, 262.
sendal (*s.*)—thin silk, 440.
sene (*adj.*)—visible, manifest, 134.
sentence (*s.*)—meaning, import, 306, 798.
seson, sesoun (*s.*)—season, time, 19.

sethe (*v. inf.*)—seethe, boil, 383.
sheeldes (*s.*)—French coins, 278.
shirreve (*s.*)—sheriff, 359,
shiten (*p. p.*)—defiled, 504.
sikerly (*adv.*)—surely, 137, 154.
sithes (*s. pl.*)—times, 485.
sleighte (*s.*)—cunning, trickery, 604.
smerte (*adv.*)—smartly, 149.
smerte (*ger. smart, sting*) ; 3 *sing. pres. subj. impers.*, althogh hym soore smerte, although he feels pain keenly, 230.

smothe (*adv.*)—smoothly, 676.
snybben (*v. inf.*)—snub, 523.
solaas (*s.*) amusement, 798.
solempne (*adj.*)—solemn, 364.
som-del (*adv.*)—somewhat, a little, 174, 446.
soo (adv.)—in that manner, 102
soore, sore (*adv.*)—sorely, 148, 230.
soothly (*adv.*) - truly, 117.
sort (*s.*)—lot, destiny, 844.
soun (*s*)—sound, 674
souple (*adj.*)—supple, 203.
sovereyn (*adj.*)—supreme, very excellent, 67.
sowne (*v. inf.*)—sound, cause to sound, 565.
sownynge (*adj.*)—talking loudly of, 275 ; resounding, full of, 307.

space (*s.*)—space of time, 87, tyme and space opportunity, 35 ; held the space, held the course, 176.

spanne (*s.*)—span, 155.

speede (*v. inf. speed, prosver*)—speeds, spede, 3 *sing. pres. subj.* God speed you, 769.

spere (*s.*)—spear. 114.
spiced (*p. p.*)—scrupulous, 526,
squir (*s.*)—squire, 79.
staat (*s.*)—state, condition, 572, 716.
staf (*s.*)—stiff, 495.
statut (s.)—statute, law, 327.

stede (*s.*)—place ; in stede of, instead of, 231.
stemed (*pl. pret.*)—glowed, 202.
stepe (*adj.*)—glittering, bright, 201, 753.
stif (*adj.*)—strong, 673.
stonde (*v. inf.*)—stand, 745 ; *ger.* stonden, 88 ; to stonden at, abide by, 778.
stoor (*s.*)—store, 615.
straunge (*adj.*)—strange, foreign, 13, 464.
streight (*adv.*)—straightway, forthwith, 671.
streit (*adj.*)—strait, strict, 174.
strem (*s.*)—stream, river, 464 ; *pl.* stremes, currents, 402.
strike (*s.*)—hank (*of flax*,) 676.
strondes (*s. pl.*)—strands, shores, countries, 13.
studie (*v. inf.*)—study, 184 ; studieth, *pl. impers, refl.* deliberate, 841.
stuwe (*s*)—fish-pond, 350.
substaunce (*s.*)—substance, property, 489.
surcote (*s.*)—surcoat, a coat worn over another, 617.
sergerye (*s.*)—surgery, 413.
swich (*adj.*)—such, 3, 243, 313 ; *pl.* swiche, such, 684.
swyn (*s.*)—swine, 598.
swynk (*s.*)—toil, labour, 188, 540.
swynken (*v. inf.*)—toil, labour, 186.
swynkere (*s.*)—toiler, worker, 531.
symple (*adj.*)—simple, modest, 119.

T

tabard (*s.*)—a herald's coat of arms, 20 ; a ploughman's smock, 541.
taille—(*s.*)—tally, 570.
take—(*ger.*) to take, 34 ; take, 3 *sing. pres. subj.* 503 ; taak, *impers. sing.*, 789.
takel (*s.*)—tackle, bow and arrows, 106.
tappestere (*s.*)—barmaid, 241.

targe (*s.*)—target, shield, 471.
tart (*adj.*)—tart, pungent, 381.
tartre (*s.*)—tartar ; oille of Tartre, cream of tartar, 630.
taryynge (*s.*)—tarrying, delay, 821.
temple (*s.*)—inn of court, 567.
text (*s.*)—dictum, saying, 177, 182.
thanne (*adv.*)—then, 12.
ther as—in the place where, 34, 172.
thilke (*s.*)—contr. for that like, that same, 182.
tho (*s.*)—*demon. adj. pl.*, those, 498.
thombe (*s.*)—thumb, 563.

thyng (*s.*)—legal document, 325 ; for any thing, in spite of anything, 276.

thynke (*v. inf. devise, imagine*)—346.

thynke (*v. inf. seem, appear, used impersonally*)—thynketh me, 3 *sing. pres.* it seems to me, 37 ; me thoughte, it seemed to me, 385 ; hym thoughte, it seemed to him, 682.

thynne (*adj.*)—thin, 679

toft (*s.*)—tuft, 555.

tollen (*v. inf.*)—take toll, payment, 562.

tope (*s.*)—top, head, 590.

trelys (*adj.*)—well-shaped, really drawn out, hence long, 152.

trompe (*s.*)—trumpet, 674.
trow, trowen (*v. inf. trow, believe*)—154, 155.
trussed (*p. p.*)—packed, 681.
tweye (*num. adj.*)—two, 704, 792.
twynne (*v. inf. sever, part*)—twynne, 1 *pl. pres.*, 835.

U

undergrowe (*p. p. as adj.*)—undergrown, 156.
unknowe (*p. p.*)—unknown, 126.

V

vavasour (*s.*)—sub-vassal, 360.
venerie (*s.*)—hunting, 166.

vernycle (*s.*)—image of St. Veronica, 685.
verray (*adj.*)—very true, 72, 422.
vertu (*s.*)—virtue, 307 ; power, 4.
veyl (*s.*)—veil, 693.

viage (*s.*)—voyage, expedition, 77 ; journey, 723, 792.

vigilies (*s. pl.*)—vigils, meetings on the eve of a festival, 377,

vileynye (*s*)—unseemly behaviour. 726 ; speech unbecoming a gentleman, 70.

visage (*s.*)—face, countenance, 109, 628.

vitaille (*s.*)—victuals, provisions, 248, 569 ; food, 749.

verdit (*s.*)—verdict, 787.

voys (*s.*) —voice, 688.

W

war (*adj.*)—prudent, 309 ; aware, 157 ; *refl.*, 662.

wastel-breed (*s.*)—a choice kind of bread, 147.

wateryng (*s.*) —watering place where horses are watered, 826.

wayte (*v. inf. watch, be on the look-out*)—wayted, 3 *sing. pret.*, was so watchful, 571 ; waited after, looked for, 525.

webbe (*s.*)—weaver, 362.

were (*v. inf. wear*)—wered, 3 *sing.*, *pret.*, wore, 75, 564, 680.

werre (*s*)—war, 47.
werte (*s.*)—wart, 555.
wette—3 *sing, pret.* wetted, 129.
wex (*s.*)—wax, 675.
weyen (*v. inf. weigh, measure*)—weyeden, 3 *pl. pret.*, 454.
whelkes (*s pl*) -pimples, 632.
whilom (*adv.*) - formerly, 795.
whit (*adj*)– white, 238.
wif (*s.*)—wife, woman, 445
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